

# OUR VOICE

JUNE 2004

DRUGS +  
ADDICTIONS

The abyss of  
desire is  
difficult to fill.

- Chinese Proverb

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## Starting at the End

When somebody asks Betty Nordin for her story, she likes to start at the end... the end of her life on the street. Fifteen years ago, after a typical night of substance abuse Betty had passed out. When she came to and found herself lying face down in the dirt of an inner-city alley Betty knew that she had hit bottom, an absolute low point... the end. She knew that she had to start doing something different.

Betty came close to not making it off the street. After one of her arrests, a judge had ordered her into Exodus House (a halfway house for female offenders) and prohibited her from entering certain parts of the city, saying that she would be automatically put in jail if she violated the restrictions. While in Exodus House Betty had a serious medical scare. She was in terrible physical condition; she had sores on her arms that were leaking pus and she was coughing up blood. After an ultrasound in the hospital, the doctor told Betty that she had a huge tumor on her liver and that it was about to rupture. The doctor also told Betty that she probably wouldn't make it unless the tumor was removed. To make a bad situation worse, while the tumor called for an emergency operation, he wasn't sure if she would survive the procedure. She decided to undergo the operation anyway and while on the operating table she didn't bleed nor was a transfusion required. Betty says with gratitude that this is just one example of how "The Man Upstairs" was looking after her.

Flashback one wild life earlier to the time of Betty's adoption in northern Alberta. The couple that was adopting

wanted only one child but Betty's mother had stipulated that Betty and her sister not be separated. Betty was three years old and her sister Edna was two. Betty still wonders which one of them her adoptive parents wanted. It was difficult growing up on the farm but Betty and Edna were not quitters. Betty was angry when she found out that she was adopted. She had some problems while growing up: she dropped out of school early and also had trouble with a neighborhood guy. This fellow was a smooth, handsome character with whom Betty became involved in a relationship. He was a momma's boy however. His parents were leaving the community and he was looking for somebody to do his laundry and feed him. Their relationship progressed to the point where they became engaged. But Betty had second thoughts and told her mother "I don't want to get married". In what was undoubtedly a profoundly important moment in Betty's life, her mother replied that she should go ahead with it anyway because the invitations had been sent out and the caterer and the hall were booked. Betty was married in 1965. Her misgivings were well founded. The husband turned out to be a wife beater. But Betty isn't one to take that kind of mistreatment lying down. She said, "it was like Stampede Wrestling, we were fighting all the time." Betty had a breakdown after a while. It was an extremely difficult time for her but she is grateful for her "two beautiful children" that resulted from that marriage.

Betty and her husband were divorced in 1970 and Betty moved to Edmonton, where she stayed at the Cecil Hotel. That was when she said to herself "it's party time" and was introduced to LSD, speed and coke. She said that she had no idea of what the world of drugs was about but she learned fast.

There was the time that she invited a bunch of people over to her place and one of her guests - "King" was his nickname - wanted to inject her with some drugs. Betty agreed and so he gave her a banger (a full needle) "in appreciation" and then shortly after that he gave her another "to show his respect". Then he gave her some acid (LSD). Betty said that by this time almost all the other guests had left but there was one woman who stayed behind and this woman saved Betty's life because with all those drugs in Betty's system, she would have overdosed on the floor of her home if the clear-headed guest hadn't called the ambulance. As it was, Betty didn't wake up until one week later, when she found herself in the hospital.

In addition to Betty's own medical close calls and outright tragedy, she was around when other people had their own. There's one chilling experience that Betty relates about a lonely old man. Betty and her pals were drinking in a bar when this guy offered to buy them some drinks. One of Betty's friends said "hey, why not? If he's stupid enough to buy us drinks I'll drink with him." The old guy bought many drinks and then invited the women back to his place. Betty passed out so she doesn't have any memory of what happened but she was awakened in the morning by one of her friends shaking her and yelling at her to "Get out! You have to go Betty! The cops are on their way!" Betty sleepily got up to see that there was blood all over the place. Her friend gave her a clean t-shirt and pushed her out of the door... (To be continued)

- Ron MacLellan

Tune in next month for  
Part 2 of Betty's story

## Betty Nordin

### Our Phoenix Poet

(Part 1)

This past May, Betty Nordin—poet and beloved member of the Our Voice community—was honoured with an Esquao Award from the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women in recognition of her strength and courage.

In this two-part series, Ron MacLellan shares Betty's life story. It is a story of struggle, hope and personal transformation.



<PUBLISHER>  
Bissell Centre, Edmonton

<MANAGING EDITOR>  
Warren Bjarnason

<DESIGN & PRODUCTION>  
Pieter de Vos, Jr.  
pdevos@bissellcentre.org

<PUBLIC RELATIONS & DISTRIBUTION>  
Ron MacLellan

<PROOFREADER>  
Flavio Hyphenus

<CARTOONIST>  
Eric Uhlich

<COVER ILLUSTRATION>  
Eric Uhlich

**EDITORIAL OFFICES & EDMONTON DISTRIBUTION:**

Bissell Centre, 10527-96 Street,  
Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 2H6  
Phone: 423-2285 Ext. 162  
Fax: 429-7908  
wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org

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OUR VOICE is a NON-PROFIT program that survives on vendors, advertising contributions and Tax Deductible Donations.

If you have any concerns about vendor behavior call our distribution team at:  
#423-2285 Ext. 139

**ADVERTISING**

For advertising rates and related information, please contact  
Paul James @ 423-2285 Ext. 147

**JUNE 2004  
VOL. 11 NO. 06**

OUR VOICE invites your contributions and input.

Letters sent to the editor are assumed to be for publication, unless otherwise indicated.

OUR VOICE welcomes written submissions (particularly those on PC compatible diskettes), cartoons, photographs or artwork.

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OUR VOICE is a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA).

# THE WORD

## Spanking King Ralph

Most drug addicts are unemployed, uneducated, homeless, inner-city residents, right? Well, hmmm, not really. Addictions don't play favourites with financial statements. Albertans from all quarters are addicted to every recreational and "hard" drug imaginable. The majority of people in the inner-city are the working poor; living, breathing indictments of a criminally low minimum wage and cuts to social programs that are unconscionable in a province with as much money as Alberta. But, we can't blame the degree of rampant drug use on the likes of Ralph Klein, can we? No wait, we can make a pretty solid case against King Ralph for making life intolerable for so many people.

When it comes to putting the "Alberta Advantage" to good use, Ralph is a fly in the ointment. With our shored-up oil reserve money, everyone in Alberta should enjoy a much more comfortable lifestyle and higher standard of living than they are getting now. I have had far too many conversations lately with people getting the run-around from SFI, AISH and WCB. Free will exists and no one is specifically "driven" to drug use, but when your lifeline is taken away, escaping from an ugly reality becomes more attractive.

Drug and alcohol use and abuse can be explained by pretending that you have a remote control that can remove you from a situation. The more peril you live in on a daily basis, the more likely you are to push that button. Addictions span the financial spectrum. Whether someone is smoking a joint on a back deck waiting for their steak and prawns to be grilled to perfection or another person

Taking Ralph to task on any given issue seems to make his behaviour weirder and weirder. If we push him hard enough, we can probably have him dressing like Napoleon Bonaparte within the span of a few months.

is inhaling solvents in an alley; the greatest destruction done by drugs on the societal end of things happens when more money is needed for drugs. People get robbed and things go missing when money is needed for drugs. Drug suppliers don't tend to be the sweeter element of society. Whenever drugs enter the picture, organized crime enters the picture, gang members and outlaw bikers become involved in your life and you wish it



would all just go away. No problem, drugs will make it all go away, right?

In this issue, we discuss personal experiences with addictions and some of the solutions being employed today. We have municipal, provincial and federal elections coming up soon and we want to know what you want to ask your prospective elected representatives. Tell us by writing a brief message to me at wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org

Taking Ralph to task on any given issue seems to make his behaviour weirder and weirder. If we push him hard enough, we can probably have him dressing like Napoleon Bonaparte within the span of a few months. Help us push Ralph over the edge.

Thanks for your support.

-Warren Bjarnason

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# Letters to the Editor

## Reflections on the April 2004 Issue

The article written about the beginnings of the paper in the April/04 issue requires a response, as history must be preserved to some degree.

I never came up with the idea for the paper, that was Martin Garber Conrad and a variety of others. They heard about it because of the Vancouver paper called Spare Change, and developed an arrangement with its editor. He sent some copies up to Edmonton, and Larry Derkach agreed to distribute them through the Casual Labour office of the Bissell Centre.

Martin then applied for and received a one time grant of about \$15,000 from the Muttart Foundation, in order to study the viability of producing such a paper in Edmonton. I was hired to do this study, and after talking to everyone involved, and crunching some numbers, recommended that this could not be done in Edmonton without financial support. I was asked to develop an arrangement with an agency in

Calgary, so that the distribution numbers would make things viable. Such an arrangement developed with C.U.P.S., Calgary Urban Project Society. So Bissell Centre, Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation and C.U.P.S. agreed to become the 'shareholders' of this new paper called Spare Change. No outside funding was arranged, there were no trips to England (though that might have been nice).

The first fiscal year we worked on a budget of about \$60,000, and missed it by just \$200. For all intensive purposes we were self sufficient, an enviable position for a social organization. Malcolm from the Boyle McCauley News was actually the first editor, he did layout and production also. Keith began to edit some articles by the second or third edition, and eventually did become a part time editor after a few months.

The Edmonton paper was \$0.50 right from the beginning. The Vancouver edition had been sold to the vendors for \$0.05 for the first few shipments, but the Vancouver Editor raised the price to \$0.25 after about the third month or so.

The vendors voted to begin the paper, knowing the price was to increase.

All agreed that this was still reasonable, and having a local paper would make it easier to sell. The paper sold well, reaching about 24,000 in monthly sales by about the

12th month. Michael Walters was the Distribution Manager by that time, working his magic with the Edmonton vendors.

Some other beautiful things happened during those times, including Songs of the Street. This was a way for some of the 'rougher' submitted poetry to find voice, Michael worked his tail off to make it happen. The poetry contest nights were the highlights of my involvement with this community, the beauty of their words bringing laughter and tears.

There were debates between Keith and me about the editorial direction of the paper. I was concerned that the paper could become the voice of 'left' wing activists, and lose the support of a huge portion of the readers at that time. The beauty of the paper in its beginnings was the way it brought all kinds of people together over issues, I thought that the stories of people's experiences did that well enough. I always advocated to make the paper 'sellable', vendors used to come into my office and tell me what worked for them and what didn't. When I had to make tough decisions, I always discussed them with a variety of vendors, to see what they would do. Often they knew more about the paper than anyone else.

The paper was produced twice monthly for about 10 months, mainly because of

pressure to do so from the Calgary arm. By that time advertising was a solid portion of the revenue, but doubling production did not double the revenue, even after months. The paper went back to monthly production, and C.U.P.S. broke away to publish its own paper. Bissell Centre became the sole 'shareholder'. I handed the reins to Keith eventually, and he to Michael, then Natasha, and now you folks.

And you are doing a great job, the paper looks and reads wonderful! There is nothing like it in Edmonton, and Edmonton is fortunate to have a voice from this community! My congratulations to all involved, the hundreds of people who have worked tirelessly to produce this paper over the years. It is always a labour of love, of passion, requiring way more energy than a 'job'. Most congratulations go to the vendors, of course! They have put in the most work, selling and writing through rain, sleet, snow and hail. They make it all worthwhile, their voice deserves to continue to be heard!

- Gord Poschwatta

P.S. For those who might be curious: I went off and did my degree in Social Work, and currently work as a Child Protection worker near Whistler, B.C.

WORD W

Word-sniffing ... is an addiction, like glue—or snow—sniffing in a somewhat less destructive way, physically if not economically.... As an addict ... I am almost guiltily interested in converts to my own illness, and in a pinch I can recommend nearly any reasonable solace, whether or not it qualifies as a true descendant of Noah Webster.

M.F.K. FISHER

## Replacements Available for Our Voice 2004 Calendar

Please note that the months of June, November & December of the *Our Voice Urban Exposure* Calendar contain printing errors.

Replacement calendars are now available from *Our Voice*.

For more information, please contact Ron at: 423-2285 Ext. 139.

We apologize for the inconvenience.



We don't hold back our opinions, why should you? If you would like to respond to something written in *Our Voice* or you simply think that Edmonton has gone long enough without hearing your views, send your comments to:

[wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org](mailto:wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org)

— or —

*Our Voice*

c/o Bissell Centre

10527-96 Street.

Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 2H6



# THE VERDICT

**R** RAGING

There is something to be said for jealousy, because it only designs the preservation of some good which we either have or think we have a right to. But envy is a **raging** madness that cannot bear the wealth or fortune of others.

FRANÇOIS, DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD



## On Lit: The Raging Grannies

*Wild Hats, Cheeky Songs and Witty Actions  
For a Better World*

In these days of chicken hawks and dogs of war. You imagine political activism to be a young persons game. But one of the most vocal groups against the regime of King Klein and his merry old men have been the Raging Grannies. In her brilliant book: *"The Raging Grannies, Wild Hats, Cheeky Songs and Witty Actions For a Better World,"* Carole Roy throws out the premise that activism is a young person's game and documents the lives of some of Canada, the States and even the world's most vocal and young-at-heart activists. Who would not want to write about the Raging Grannies? Their presence at protests have been entertaining and enlightening enough to provide the impetus for Carole Roy to write about the Grannies.

*"I knew some of the women who became the first Raging Grannies in Victoria and I was always inspired by their creativity and daring. They provided a very positive model of getting older and remaining meaningfully engaged in society."*

As the crowd loudly cheered, "Go Grannies Go," a group of older women stepped into the British Columbia Legislature Building and onto the public scene: the briefs they wanted to present at the hearing on uranium mining were contained in a laundry basket, a clothesline of female underwear. This humorous action at the end of February 1987 marks the entry on the BC political scene of a unique grassroots phenomenon. The Raging Grannies have since become a Canadian institution of protest. They challenge stereotypes and authorities with disarming smiles, an arsenal of witty satirical songs, and a dynamic imagination for theatrical actions that put their concerns front and centre

This is how the book opens, the narrative of these Raging Grannies flows through like a fairy story told on your grandma's knee. Except this is no fairy story. The effect the Raging Grannies have had upon activism in Canada is very real. By being not perfectly in tune, the Grannies have pushed you into the mindset that any individual can have a voice. This is the same motivation that caused Carole Roy to write in the first place.

"When I became a student, I became aware of how invisible women are in most official histories and decided that I could contribute a little by recording the history of this group of activists. Not only will it record women's daring contributions but also helps to recognize and acknowledge the contributions of older women in our society."

And the Raging Grannies have used the idea of age as a useful tool. By becoming human shields when police officers have gotten violent in protest situations. Completely shifting how older women are portrayed in society. "Often, older women are invisible (how often do you see an older woman in an ad or in a film or the major character of a book or TV program? I think they are also often dismissed as "old fashion" while in fact many of them are very progressive."

In fact, this book is more than a document of political activism; it will make you consider how you treat all the elders in your life.

The reason why Ralph Klein and his cronies are nervous about the Raging Grannies are because they put into voice and action what the people really think. As Carole muses about what effect the Raging Grannies have had upon the political landscape:

*"They have been able to attract attention from ordinary people as well as from authorities. They can translate complex issues into easily understandable and humorous songs, which makes it easier for people to listen about information that is often difficult to hear. Their songs are often about painful issues of poverty and violence or ecological destruction. At times they do get victories over some of the issues they work on, but the fact that they are out there voicing their view of things gives meaning to the word democracy. Dissent is really important in democracy."*

And yes, there are songs galore in the book with the keys so you can sing along with the Grannies at any protest. These are the stories and songs of ideas and change knitted into a wonderful quilt, each section and patch a different voice from the Raging Grannies and this how Carole crafted this narrative of folksy protest.

This book tells the actions and thoughts of the Raging Grannies so well you wonder what role does the author have in the activist community and she replies:

*"I was a peace and social justice activist in the 1970s and 1980s but right now I see my work as recording the work of activists so it doesn't get lost. In 1982 I walked from New Orleans to New York for nuclear disarmament and to publicize the second UN Session on Disarmament initiated by the non-aligned countries (a 2,000 miles, 5 1/2 month walk). I then joined German Women for Peace and walked from Bonn to Vienna again for nuclear disarmament. In 1985, I joined Norwegian Women For Peace in the Central America Peace March from Panama to Mexico to express solidarity with the people working for peace and justice, support the respect of human rights, and also convey to the leader that the rest of the world had their eyes on their then-war torn region."*

This is also the story of how some of the grannies moved on feeling what the grannies was doing was not enough. This expansion of view has prompted Carol to write about another group of women lost in the media shuffle and continuing her work in teaching

I am interested in broadening my understanding of older women environmental activists on Vancouver Island and in the Peterborough region, where I have just moved. I am also starting to collaborate on a project that looks at creativity and women. I will also be teaching two courses at Trent University next year and being part of another research team that is looking at the contributions of older women."

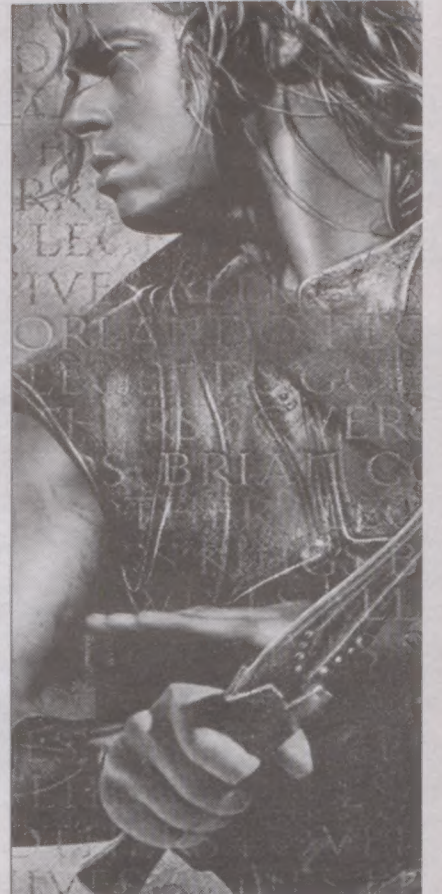
You would think that working so closely with these women would provide motivation to become a Raging Granny but as Carol asserts, "No. I think at some point in my life I might be one but right now my activities take me onto another path. But I highly respect and appreciate what they do."

This book with its photos and songs and documentation of all the Raging Grannies groups including our own Edmonton chapter will provide inspiration and insight into the effect these brave group of women have had upon the face of Canadian politics and even world wide. The only problem I had with the book is the bright yellow covers which make it look like a dummies manual which might make certain politicians want to pick it up but I don't think Georgie would make it beyond all the big words.

But the only way to understand this book is through a song:

Rebels in Disguise  
I looked like a granny  
I felt like a granny.  
I thought I was a granny.  
Then I got wise  
Now I am a rebel in disguise.  
I learned it was canny  
To Protest Loud.

-Philip Jagger



## On Film: Troy

Outside of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, the modern epic doesn't trust its audience to handle anything sublime or subtle and why should it? The producers know that North American moviegoers have the attention span of a gnat and an imagination pummeled threadbare by visual overkill. No matter how classical, any legend in the hands of Hollywood will be presented at a pandering angle but we, the viewers, have grown to expect, nay want nothing more. Troy dishes up this magnificent mediocrity in perfect form (and shamelessly rips off LOTR with the mournful Celtic wailing behind the panoramic battle scenes - what hubris!). But the flaw that just keeps giving in Troy (its Achilles' heel) is Achilles himself — Brad Pitt. Let me count the ways.

Pitt appears to be a complacent accomplice of his superficial worth; perhaps being a reigning Hollywood hunk is enough for him. Also, he's 40 now and, in Tinseltown, that may be unnerving even for men. It's painfully obvious in Troy that looks are the currency he's banking on; smells like mid-life spirit. My sister read that he requested his gratuitous bare-butt scenes and, all in all, Helen of Troy (Diane Kruger) is a dim flicker outside Achilles' endless spotlight, saucy bed-head coiffure and nudie prancing. Butt, oops I mean Brad, is sporting beefier muscles than ever here and, even though Achilles was blond, did his hair have to be tousled and twisted in such a Californian style? At one point, when his mother Thetis (Julie Christie, no stranger to The Epic) discusses his destiny with flat, distracted sadness, Pitt looks out to sea, his jaw clenched in what I guess is fearless nobility, I was expecting him to mutter "gnarly dude".

Continued Next Page (Pg. 5)



# THE RHUBARB



## A Break in the Cycle

I wanted my mind to jump to the wins, but I couldn't recall any. I do remember the losses. My uncle Joe Seeley drinking himself stone drunk on our front veranda for weeks on end. That would happen maybe twice a year when his wife had had too much and sent him over to our place for a break. My Uncle Tom, back from some northern construction site, would do the same thing, only holed up at the kitchen table with his Gilbey's gin. "White Satin" was the brand and the labels really were a smooth white satin. As a little kid, I peeled them and I loved rubbing them against my cheeks — so soothing they were in the midst of the chaos. I had an extensive collection.

Lost a sister — still alive but brain damaged, mildly demented from all the alcohol. Kenny, my climbing partner, dead. My sister's son Marsh, dead. Young Matt, too, but that was crystal meth — his face picked apart from imaginary sores he couldn't leave alone. I was his "Uncle-at-Large." Actually, I don't know whether he's alive or dead. I have some phone numbers, so I could find out, but I'm too frightened to make the calls.

Wins? Hopefulness? I started out thinking, "Forget it; go ask someone else." But that's wrong...that's wrong. I'm a win. Michael Ondaatje wrote a book he called "Coming through Slaughter." I came through it. I didn't repeat the family pattern. For me, it was the luck of finding a woman I wanted more than I wanted to drink when I was still young and had a choice. Maybe, I would say, not "coming through," but more taking a pass on slaughter. Don't go there. That's where I find the hopefulness. Maybe read something like this and don't go down that road. Or stop and turn around while it's still early,

because it gets to be a long, long way back, and it gets harder and harder to remember the directions.

Anyhow, most of all, I remember Pa. Most of all, even though his wasn't the ugliest of these stories, but he was my Pa. But even more "most of all", I want you to remember I didn't do what he did. Maybe you're young and maybe your mom or dad is caught in an addiction, and you'll read this — maybe — and realize you don't have to follow them into hell, either.

### Pa

Mom used to send me around to the hotels to find him and bring him home. I was a teenager then. It was almost too much shame to remember.

Once, when I was a bit older, I tried going with him, hoping to get him out before he got too drunk. "Come on, Pa." I said, "We've had a couple — let's go home." He said, "Two beers is no good to me, son." I went home alone. I never tried that again.

After mom died, he was old, but still wanting sex. Wanting younger women. (Does that go without saying, or is that just my cheapness?)

I remember a phone call and the woman telling me to keep him away from her, that if he called her anymore, she'd tell her husband. I remember the police coming around to have a word with him.

When I was forty I smashed up my lower leg and did damage down into the ankle joint.

Left it partially fused so I limp. His was arthritis, but he limped the same way. So now I limp like him—not as bad—but prob-

ably I'll be just the same once my arthritis sets in.

I'm the same sort of coward, too, I think. George Owens, Jr. was a big, rough man. Pa had bad-mouthed him all over town. When George asked him if it was true, Pa lied to escape a beating.

That happened where Pa was working. He was a carpenter and I was his helper sweeping up, and I was standing right there listening to him lie.

But now that I'm older, I don't know if I'd do any different. I look just like him and I limp the same way, and I imagine I'm the same kind of coward.

I sometimes think that sex thing is working at me, too. When he died, some part of his brain was damaged from all the alcohol, or they thought it was. They wanted his brain for some sort of study. I said, no. I just wanted him buried.

So, if Linda goes first, maybe I won't have that kind of problem with women. At least, I can't ever see myself drinking like him.

I hope the police won't be coming around to have a word with me. I hope there won't be women phoning my friends — I don't have kids — telling them to keep me away from them, or to stop calling, or they'll go to the police.

The memories are burnt in...

"And what did you learn today, son?" put to me unfailingly when I returned from school. At least, he was sober then. "I want you to be a scholar, son." Wept in his cups later when he returned from the hotel.

Clockwork. The maddening question at four. Off to the hotel by eight. Back drunk by eleven. My heart and my stomach both in knots at the kitchen table as the hour approached. My head doing math homework in a three-ring binder, trying to forget the end of every day.

His uneven footfall at the door. Mother's nightly accusation, "You're drunk." His spiteful denial as the air in the room filled with the smell of alcohol. Somewhere in the pathetic course of things, the declaration of his hopes for his scholar son. It was his ploy to elicit sympathy, to stop Mother from screaming at him. It never worked. Sometimes, I would threaten to quit school. But nothing could stop the drinking — not threats, not professions of love, not begging...in the final years, not fists.

And the strange thing I can say to you is that he was a good man, and I wouldn't trade him for anyone. A descendant of potato farmers, at one remove from a dirt floor and the sod roof under which his father was born. A simple carpenter who loved learning; in the end, a common drunk. This man for whom something never explained went wrong, or at least his children never knew...

The memories are burnt in...

In sober times...mostly, anyhow...he read me poetry and fine literature, pushed me toward the passions of the mind, the ecstasy of thinking, the shivering thrill of learning. Wanted me to be a great orator, a William Gladstone: more, a mathematician, scholar, politician, an Eamon de Valera. Even a poet.

So the strange thing I can say to you — and say with a love rightly offered in spite of everything — is that he was a good man, and I wouldn't trade him for anyone, and I'm not in denial about anything, scared as I am sometimes about who I might turn out to be.

- Fabian Jennings

### Troy Continued from Pg. 5

Pitt's acting range is amazingly banal but at least he didn't bungle a British accent as many Americans in historical dramas do. (One of the most ridiculous was Claire Danes's inexplicable attempt when playing Cosette in "Les Misérables" but I guess she had to show Gwyneth Paltrow, her rival "it" girl, that she could do an English accent too). No, he resisted the urge to be Brit Pitt and instead went for the de trop bass monotone Russell Crowe used in *Gladiator* (but Pitt sounds more like a dubbed voice from a Kung Fu movie). One place Pitt's characterization was accurate is that Achilles was arrogant. Achilles evolved in myth as one favored by the gods, making him nearly invincible. Scuttlebutt is he was dunked in the river Styx as an infant to be covered with the gods' protection. But, being held by the heel when dunked, that small part of him was untouched by the mythical water and remained vulnerably mortal. This was doubtless never mentioned to his insurance company.

Orlando Bloom's acting range isn't greatly larger. He is very beautiful, has a lovely voice and he could sit pretty as Legolas but now that he's playing mortals, he needs to get beyond the one-dimensional, book-illustration heroic pose. I used to think he may become a less-debauched Jeremy Irons but he too may be stymied by his looks. The Paris of myth was abandoned as an infant on a mountainside because an oracle said he'd be the ruin of Troy. But instead of being made mincemeat by the elements, he was suckled by a bear and grew into a mighty, fearless athlete. The mythical Paris is far from the lover boy scrawny-pants of the movie — here Paris is a shocking weenie, even though he accidentally brings about the downfall of a major player and causes the Sears-catalogue beautiful Helen to run away with him.

But, enough derision, let's talk about Eric Bana, who plays Hector. He was born Eric Banadinovich in Melbourne, Australia, to a Croatian father and German mother. He is wonderful to watch and is, like Sean Bean (*Odysseus*), to the heroic manner naturally born. His expressions are strongly set yet there's a spiritual quality in his face — a wise, respectful fear when fear's appropriate and a deep comprehension in his soulful eyes and speech. He's like a young Cat Stevens on steroids (high compliment). I wanted him to clean Achilles' clock (sundial?) in the worst way but, well, that's not what happens. Hector is deeply loved by his father, Priam, played by the 72-year-old Peter O'Toole. O'Toole still looks remarkably regal but I daresay he's had "a pull", i.e. facelift; oh well, his good old bones wear it well. He still has his bag of dramatic actor's tricks at hand; he can writhe and rage and exult on cue and his back shakes with Shakespearean sobs as he looks over a besieged Troy.

Troy is just what I expected it to be — a soulless spectacle, quickly forgotten. I suspect it was a commercial enterprise, shrewdly trying to glean an audience from LOTR's great financial harvest. There is talk of gods but none makes an appearance; it was likely too costly and creatively challenging. Bottom line: I could almost recommend this movie for the sake of Brad Pitt's revolting narcissism; one has to see it to believe it. Why a man would want to tart himself down like this is head shaking and actually sad but we get what we keep paying for.

- Keyna Laurence

CYCLE C

The cycle of the machine is now coming to an end. Man has learned much in the hard discipline and the shrewd, unflinching grasp of practical possibilities that the machine has provided in the last three centuries: but we can no more continue to live in the world of the machine than we could live successfully on the barren surface of the moon.

LEWIS MUMFORD



# THE RHUBARB

V VEIN

Upon entering my **vein**, the drug would start a warm edge that would surge along until the brain consumed it in a gentle explosion. It began in the back of the neck and rose rapidly until I felt such pleasure that the world sympathizing took on a soft, lofty appeal.

GUS VAN SANT



## Raising the Virtual Vein

### Internet Addiction

I spend a lot of time on the net or working on projects on my computer, often to the point where I default to the basic 25 hour biological cycle and become totally disconnected from the 24 hour solar cycle that all the rest of the world is using, in the way people living in caves without any time cues do. It takes a lot of work to get out of that and rejoin the rest of the world. I have a feeling that this may not be the healthiest kind of lifestyle. So I went to Google and entered "Internet addiction". Holy cow! Fifteen or twenty hours of reading later, I discover there is a lot of thought going on about the deleterious effects on the relationships, job performance, physical and mental health, and social connections of people who spend too much time on-line. In the process I discovered I fit that demographic to some extent. I'm in the fairly small group who spend an inordinate amount of time web-surfing and writing e-mails, not in the much larger groups who hang out in chat rooms or in interactive games. Beyond screwing up my sleep cycle, subjecting myself to a certain amount of malnutrition, neglecting my housework and not getting anywhere near enough exercise I haven't exposed myself to the worst internet abuse has to offer.

My review of the net material turned up a few themes that were repeated over and over. One theme basically revolved around something that might be nitpicking to some people but is crucial to many because of insurance coverage issues. Is internet overuse an addiction or a compulsion? Addictions

are defined as dependency on a substance that creates physical and perceptual changes. Compulsions are seen as the acting out of unresolved psychological issues from within the person. Anyone who has suffered an addiction or had to relate to an addict knows that these issues are intertwined more often than not and to the sufferer the definition is far less important than the damage the addiction or compulsion is doing to their life.

And make no mistake about it, internet abuse is very costly. The Centre for Online and Internet Addiction reports:

"It is estimated that employee Internet misuse and abuse cause over four billion dollars in lost work productivity. Surveys reveal that 1 in 5 employees view online pornography at work and that 70% of adult web sites are hit between the hours of 9-5. Not only do employees surf sex sites but they also visit sport sites, bid on eBay, trade stocks, shop online, and send tasteless jokes to coworkers."

David N. Greenfield, Ph.D. of The University of Connecticut in 'Lost in cyberspace: the web @ work' says:

"Although most businesses probably expect some degree of personal use of the Internet while at work (just as they do for the telephone and copier) they are probably not prepared for the two-three hours or so a day that heavy Internet users are spending online while at work. The financial ramifications of this cyber-slacking may be seen in the form of reduced productivity and decreased efficiency, but there may be other costs as well."

Some other of those costs were articulated very eloquently by a lady speaking to Dr. Greenfield on ABCNEWS.com:

"I spent almost all of my time on the Internet a few years ago. It ruined my marriage. I spent as little time as possible cooking, cleaning and paid my husband of 13 years no attention. It can happen. You won't even know it's happening until your husband is gone, you kids are out running around and you suddenly look up and you are the only one there! I wouldn't wish this on anyone."

Virtual adultery is also damaging to relationships. Centre for Online and Internet Addiction reports,

"Cybersexual Addiction has become a specific sub-type of Internet addiction. It has been estimated that 1 in 5 Internet addicts are engaged in some form of on-line sexual activity (primarily viewing cyberporn and/or engaging in cybersex). Early studies show that men are more likely to view cyberporn, while women are more likely to engage in erotic chat." Elsewhere in my browsing I discovered that up to 30% of the people who indulge in erotic chat go that extra mile and arrange to meet each other. These people can be exposing themselves to additional dangers from predators. This is of particular concern with very young internet users who may present themselves as older and more experienced than they really are.

For some the ease of internet purchases is disastrous. Dr. David N. Greenfield says, "the Internet makes it extraordinarily easy to find and buy things. I think this is primarily because of the anonymity and instantaneous gratification that is available while shopping online...It's likely to become a much bigger problem because, as speed increases, there will be ways to store your financial data in your computer so you won't have to re-enter your info each time you order, so you can click a button and instantly order. It's going to make the Home Shopping Network look like a Mom and Pop store."

Centre for Online and Internet Addiction comments: "Net Compulsions are a new and increasingly worrisome category under the umbrella diagnosis of Internet Addiction. Net compulsions are related to Compulsive Online Gambling, Online Auction Addiction, or Obsessive Online Trading. Our company has seen a dramatic rise in these issues over the past year alone due to the popularity of auction houses, virtual casinos, and online brokerage houses."

The internet is very seductive in many different ways. For people who spent long hours hidden under a blanket with a flashlight reading when they were supposed to be sleeping during their childhoods, the plethora of information, twenty four hours a day, is overwhelming. Dr. Kimberly S. Young, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, commented, "The Internet only feeds America's 'fast food' mentality towards information. People are craving immediate access to the most up-to-date, current information and then find themselves trapped in enormous information gluts."

For other people the internet offers a stage on which they can play out their most hidden fantasies in complete anonymity and lack of personal responsibility or true intimacy. Some people create dynamic on-line personas for themselves and/or very elaborate personal websites. Nobody can see you so you can say anything you like about yourself. Some people, I include myself in

this number, only participate in chats as "lurkers", reading the posts of others with great interest but never posting themselves. Any kind of personality type can find a niche, something not always possible in RL.

The internet in sum offers a way to engage in so many potentially disastrous compulsive activities that can have so many very far reaching consequences that China has shut down 8,600 internet cafes to protect young patrons from western temptations.

How does this all relate to the very poor people living in Edmonton you might wonder? I was surprised to find that the largest single group of people who overindulge in internet activities are unemployed, homemakers, students, disabled et. al. at 42%. At the library you can get an hour of internet time every day on their public machines for free, ditto at the Bissell and other front line agencies, in post secondary schools, sometimes even after you graduate, as alumni. A lot of people who do not have their own computers use these services and the slightly more affluent can use cyber cafes. Bissell and other agencies have supplied low income individuals with computers from the many donations of older machines that come through their doors. There is a lot of access available. Couple that with the stigmatization and social isolation suffered by people who are physically unsightly, impoverished, older, handicapped or suffering from depression and other kinds of mental and mood disorders and the internet becomes yet another cave to crawl into, like alcoholism or drug abuse to escape the cruelty of the world outside. And like these other kinds of escapes there is sometimes an unexpected price to pay.

In the end I think the internet fails people who try to use it as a substitute for real life connections. The remark I found in my rambles that resonated most with my lived experience was, again by Dr. David N. Greenfield:

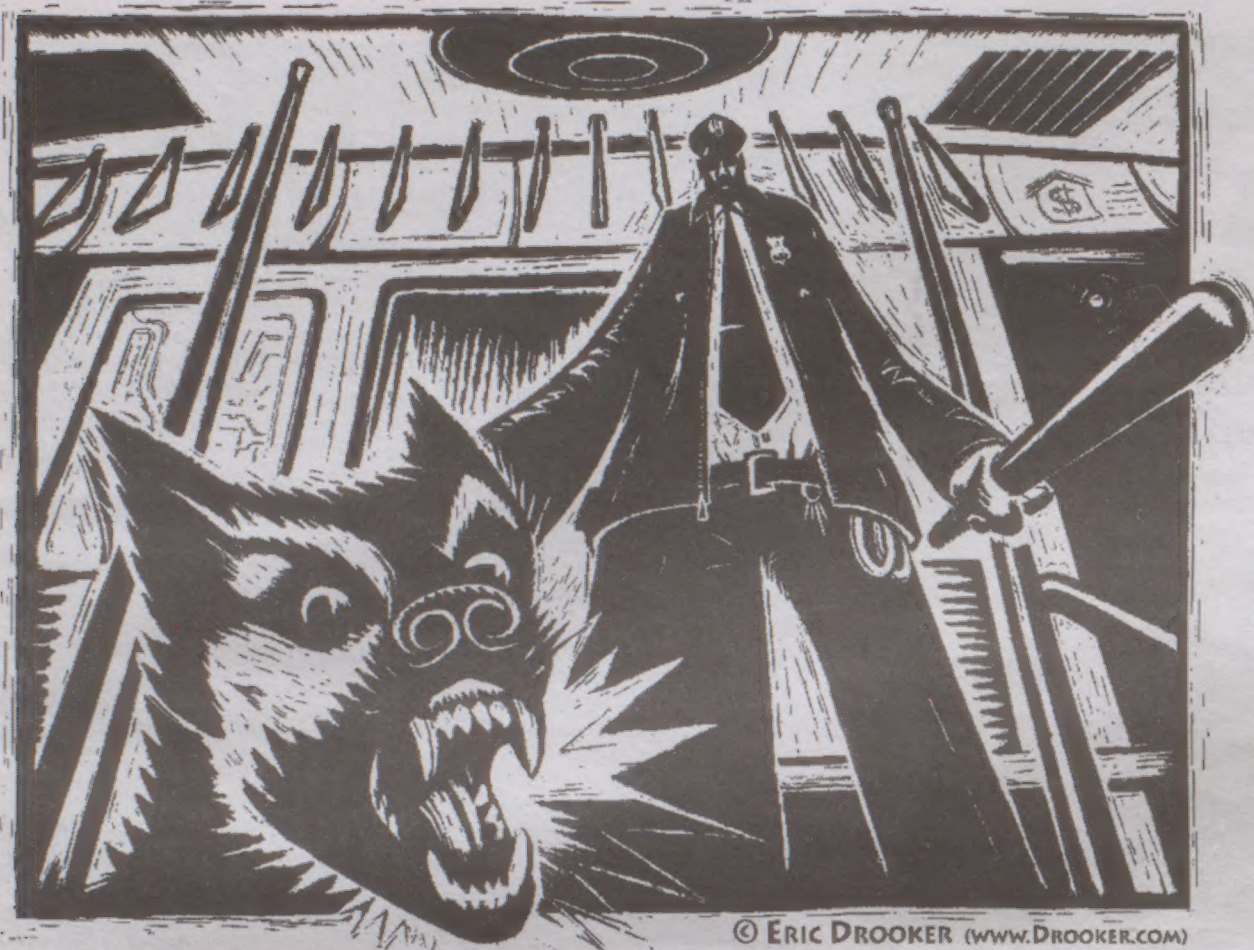
"We don't like to feel uncomfortable and we don't have time to feel bad. Feeling bad requires us to think, feel and perhaps do something that might take some effort to change our life. This can be a hard thing for many of us to do. The reasons why this is so hard are complex. It probably involves an expectation in our culture that we shouldn't have to feel bad at all; and if we have to feel bad, it should not be for very long. Addictions may, in part, be the result of a society that has lost its ability to heal itself. A society with no tolerance for pain, and no patience to change. Addictions are a way of separating us from our inner experience and this is done with the implicit approval of everyone we meet, including the media. No one wants to feel anything, least of all, anything uncomfortable. So we go on and try to numb our discomfort in a wide variety of ways, with the Internet being the latest."

I know from my own experience that the times I retreat into my computer projects or into cyberspace or into marathon reading are those times when I have experienced hurt and feelings of betrayal in my relationships with people. Sometimes it takes a long time before I feel like coming out and risking my emotions in RL again. I'm sure this happens to other people. What I'm also beginning to realize, is, thanks to the efforts of friends and family who persist in trying to reach me when I have withdrawn from them yet again, that although the most hurtful things happen in RL, that is also where the only real healing happens.

- Theresa McBryan



# THE RHUBARB



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## The Jib's Up!

### A Crash Course on Crystal Meth

**J**ib is Edmonton slang for crystal methamphetamine, a highly addictive member of the amphetamine family. You've probably heard about it in the paper or on TV. You might think crystal meth is being used only in the US and bigger cities in Canada. If you think that, you would be wrong. Crystal meth is here. It is important to find out what's going on in Edmonton.

Opinions about crystal meth are varied but hard information is not so easy to find. That's why it's important to get the facts about the drug. To get the facts, the Social Development Working Group of Edmonton's Safer Cities Initiative sponsored a study to look at crystal meth use.

To carry out the study, the Working Group hired a researcher, Ann Goldblatt, and two assistant researchers. 71 stakeholders from the fields of education, community health, justice and law enforcement, addictions and prostitution were interviewed.

The intent of the study was to gather information on the drug user, the drug itself, the impact on agency practices—current and planned—and community safety. The Working Group was also interested to know what spokespersons saw as recommended action to deal with crystal meth.

Crystal meth is a synthetic stimulant, similar to "speed." The crystal meth being used in Edmonton is manufactured locally.

And it is manufactured fairly easily. The ingredients are legal and available in stores, and the recipe can be found without much trouble. This makes crystal meth easy to get and fairly inexpensive. At around \$10 to get high, meth has a price similar to crack. But what is making it more attractive is that while the high from crack lasts minutes, the high from crystal meth lasts anywhere from 4 to 12 hours.

The most common users of crystal meth right now are 15 to 25 years old. Drug agencies do point out, however, that for this age group the most common drugs used are still alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco, in that order.

Users come from all socioeconomic groups. Most users smoke the drug. Smoking gives the quickest high. Smoking crystal meth is the most addictive.

Meth users experience an initial rush of energy followed by a long high. Users frequently binge on the drug. Depending on the length of the high, users come to display a variety of symptoms and behaviour. The most benign effects are that the user becomes impulsive and agitated. However, it is not uncommon for users to become paranoid and aggressive and sometimes violent.

Sleeping and eating have little importance for the crystal meth user. They become malnourished and dehydrated. Users often develop what are known as "speed bumps" - rashes and sores. They can also have muscle spasms, mental confusion, and spend hours doing the same thing over and over. This last is known as "tweaking" and "geeking."

Withdrawal from crystal meth holds its own difficulties. Withdrawal takes a longer time than other drugs. Users become

depressed, and this often leads to thoughts about suicide.

The drug also takes a special toll on families and communities. To maintain a crystal meth binge, users must often resort to crime. They may start pushing the drug. They may turn to theft or prostitution. Another danger to the community, including the meth user, comes from the perils of the meth labs. The manufacturing process creates toxic wastes and there is always the danger of deadly gases and severe explosions and fires.

Among the people interviewed for this study, there were many recommendations about how to deal with the issue of crystal meth. Some of the ideas are more general and wide-ranging. Almost all call for continued collaboration between the various organizations and agencies that come in contact with users of crystal meth. Most spokespersons feel there is an urgent need for more and better public education about the drug. This means getting more information out to youth and parents as well as to providers of community services, educators and faith groups.

There are also some very specific recommendations about how to handle the problem. One of these is to pass legislation to limit the availability of the ingredients for making crystal meth. Many people feel there needs to be quicker access to treatment for users combined with more treatment tailored to youthful users and expanded outreach services. Finally, many of the experts believe that crystal meth requires longer treatment periods followed by effective follow-up treatment.

For a copy of the study, call, write or e-mail:  
Kate Gunn  
Safer Cities Community Co-ordinator  
Community Services  
5th Floor, Revillon Building  
10320 - 102 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 4A1  
496-4889  
kate.gunn@edmonton.ca

## Drug Epidemic

### Today's Great Plague?

DRUGS **D**

**D**rug addiction is today's version of an epidemic, such as the great plague of the Middle Ages or the Spanish flu of the First World War.

There is a major difference on how a cure was taken on to solve these epidemics. In the past, all levels of government and scientific forces were united in finding a cure. In today's world, the government has the attitude that the people that are addicted to some form of narcotic are not of any value to society, so they might as well let them deteriorate and hopefully just die. But if an epidemic comes along that affects cattle or chickens, they go into an all-out-frenzy to find a remedy. One example of this is the mad cow disease. All levels of government poured millions and millions of dollars into solving this disease that struck cattle. They paid out the bulk of this money to rich feedlots instead of the traditional common rancher. So you can see that the rich looked after the wealthy, before any thing trickled down to those that needed it most. Next disease to come along is the avian flu, which affects our poultry. How many millions will go into that problem? In my opinion when it comes to livestock or animals, cost or commitment has no limits. But when it comes to people there is not the same commitment or value put on a cure. That goes to show you what the government and media consider worth more to society.

How do we solve the problem of drug addiction? Where do we start?

Our governments have to admit that it is a problem of epidemic proportions. We then must treat people with compassion, and do whatever it will cost to give them something to work toward.

Most important of all is that we treat people as worthwhile human beings.

One way of making drugs unpopular might be to give drug dealers such a stiff sentence, when caught that they will be too terrified getting caught, that they will not do it again. That will make it very difficult to obtain drugs. Me, I don't know how to even start solving such a huge problem, but there are a lot of great thinkers and problem solvers out there that could apply their skills and money to solve this problem.

A hundred years from now the people will say why didn't they do something? Why did they just let a generation of human beings self-destruct?

- Robert Brooks

Drugs bring us to the gates of paradise, then keep us from entering.

MASON COOLEY



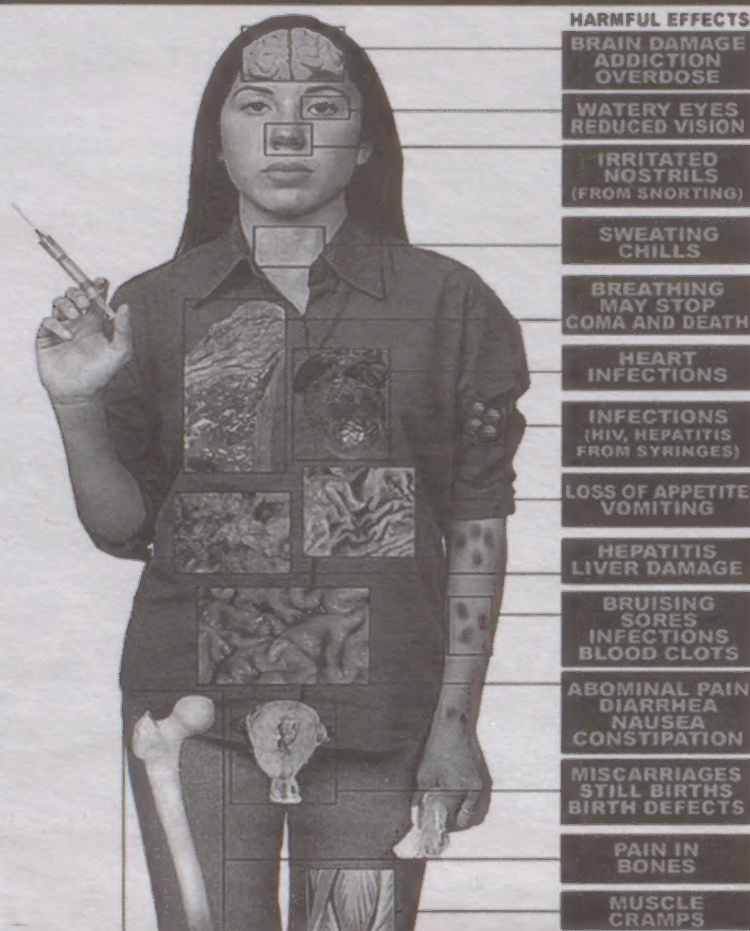
# SCUTTLEBUTT

## HEROIN

### 0 OPIATES

The chemistry of dissatisfaction is as the chemistry of some marvelously potent tar. In it are the building stones of explosives, stimulants, poisons, opiates, perfumes and stench.

ERIC HOFFER



#### HARMFUL EFFECTS

- BRAIN DAMAGE
- ADDICTION
- OVERDOSE
- WATERY EYES
- REDUCED VISION
- IRRITATED
- NOSTRILS
- (FROM SNORTING)
- SWEATING
- CHILLS
- BREATHING
- MAY STOP
- COMA AND DEATH
- HEART
- INFECTIONS
- INFECTIONS
- (HIV, HEPATITIS
- FROM SYRINGES)
- LOSS OF APPETITE
- VOMITING
- HEPATITIS
- LIVER DAMAGE
- BRUISING
- SORES
- INFECTIONS
- BLOOD CLOTS
- ABOMINAL PAIN
- DIARRHEA
- NAUSEA
- CONSTIPATION
- MISCARRIAGES
- STILL BIRTHS
- BIRTH DEFECTS
- PAIN IN
- BONES
- MUSCLE
- CRAMPS

## Methadone:

### Substituting One Addiction for Another?

The answer is no. Methadone is a legal, scientifically-validated treatment for the psychiatric condition called opioid dependence. But first, let's be clear about our terms of reference: opioids, methadone and addiction.

Methadone is an opioid, meaning it is in the family of drugs that comprises heroin, morphine, codeine and a number of other biologically active compounds. This group of drugs is used principally as pain killers and cough suppressants. They have side effects such as sedation, constipation and euphoria—literally "feeling good." Opiates are those opioids which are derived from the opium poppy, while the broader term opioid includes opiates and all synthetic compounds which act in a similar fashion.

Methadone, often called "meth," should not be confused with "crystal meth," which is methamphetamine. Amphetamines are powerful stimulants.

Opioid dependence in psychiatric terms means addiction. It is a combination of physical and psychological dependence to heroin or heroin-like drugs. The defining characteristic of addiction lies in the behaviours and ways of thinking that result in negative consequences for the person who uses.

Someone who takes an opioid for pain in a responsible, controlled fashion may develop physical dependence, and even go through physical withdrawal if the medica-

tion is suddenly stopped. However, without the psychological dependence and negative behaviours that go along with uncontrolled opioid use, he is not an addict.

People who are addicted to drugs do some unusual and often illegal things to feed their addiction. They will lie to family, friends and physicians. They will cheat and steal, if necessary. They will forego normal, pleasant activities in favour of drug use. They will neglect their health, their responsibilities and their own long-term interests. Both women and men may engage in prostitution to maintain their supply of drugs.

It's important to understand that opioid addiction isn't limited to the hardcore heroin junkie. Many people who have never injected have a severe addiction to opioids, usually the prescribed kind. The common themes are physical and psychological dependence on the drug, and abnormal, counterproductive behaviour as a result of the addiction.

It's clear that opioid addiction is a complicated situation. There is no simple solution.

Methadone maintenance treatment or "MMT" is not a cure, just like medications are not a cure for diabetes or high blood pressure. Conversely, it's not simply substituting a legal drug for an illegal one.

Methadone completely prevents withdrawal symptoms, and reduces or eliminates the desire to use. A person on the right dose of methadone looks and acts as normally as anybody else. Methadone doesn't give you a "high," and in fact blocks the euphoric effects of other opioids, resulting in less use. There is no evidence that people on the proper dose of methadone have any noticeable impairment, mentally or physically.

Methadone has been shown to reduce

the transmission of HIV and hepatitis C. People on methadone often return to work, school, or childcare, or other constructive contributions to society. They are less likely to commit crime and end up in jail. They can start treatment for HIV, hepatitis C, and all the other health problems that can affect anyone. They become "normal."

The usual scenario is someone goes to AADAC and says they want to get off drugs. They are carefully evaluated to determine if methadone is the right thing for them. If it looks like methadone may help, they see a physician at AADAC and started at a low dose and carefully increased to an effective dose over several weeks or months. They go to the treatment centre each day and take their once-daily dose, which is mixed with orange drink.

People on MMT are carefully monitored by urine screening for other drugs, they are constantly being assessed by program staff, and are encouraged to engage in counselling or other programs. If there is evidence of stability—clean urines and close adherence to the treatment plan—they will start going to a community pharmacy each day to consume their dose. Stable patients are given "carries," or take-home doses that they consume on the appropriate days. This allows them further to normalise their lives.

In our society, which seems to be very concerned about cost-effectiveness, consider this: a recent study in Toronto showed that every recreational opioid user cost the system over \$40 000 per year. More than half of that was from law enforcement and correctional services; i.e., the police and jail. Methadone maintenance treatment costs about \$6000 per year. Every dollar spent on methadone results in a cost saving of up to 7 dollars. This doesn't take into account that people on methadone are more likely to be working, and paying tax, or at least less dependent on the welfare system. As well, indirect costs like insurance, property damage, and harm to others are reduced. So the actual value of MMT is very great.

An important part of MMT is counselling. Whether or not they are on methadone, people with addictions need support and counselling. MMT programs such as AADAC's Opiate Dependency Program encourage people to take a good look at themselves, and assist them to make positive, lasting changes that will allow them to get and stay clean.

Some people will start tapering off methadone once they have their lives back on track. Each situation is unique, but most who come off methadone will relapse to illicit opioid use. For many, it is necessary to stay on methadone for many years, and sometimes forever. There are 70-year-olds on methadone who are enjoying healthy, productive lives in part because of methadone.

Methadone is not perfect. It doesn't work well for everybody, for a number of reasons. Methadone has no direct effect on use of other drugs, like cocaine, methamphetamine (crystal meth or Ecstasy), marijuana, alcohol, or any other psychoactive substance. Sometimes people use a lot of different drugs because their lives are so chaotic, and with the stability that methadone can bring, use of these other drugs diminishes or ceases completely.

For many opioid-dependent people, methadone as part of a treatment program is the best route to a normal life.

A person on methadone should be congratulated for making positive changes in his life. Acceptance and support for people struggling with addiction is something we can all provide, and is often the best therapy.

- Mat Rose MD

## F.A.S.D.

### Well Communities Well Families

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is the term used to describe a whole range of clinical conditions under the umbrella of alcohol-related birth defects. Many affected individuals go unrecognized. They appear 'normal' with above-average IQ's and are often seen as being deliberately defiant or disruptive when in effect these behaviors occur because of the neurological damage of FASD that causes a variety of cognitive and behaviour problems. FASD is an invisible mental health disorder, generally undiagnosed or dealt with appropriately. FASD is incurable and its symptoms are forever.

Grim words aren't they? But in a calm, structured setting where expectations are clear and appropriate responses reinforced, small miracles occur every day at Well Community - Well Families.

Our advocates are counselors, teachers, guides, leaders, instructors, advisors and coaches. They recognize the effects of FASD on cognitive and behavioral functioning in our participants and they establish a strong network of positive supports that create a safe and stable environment and offer long-term service provision and functional skill assessments.

Our advocates never give up on participants. They help counteract the negativity and low self-esteem that accumulates from day after day of failing to meet expectations and often results in erratic or irrational behavior. They do this by teaching problem-solving skills and finding alternative successes and rewards. An advocate can help an adult with FASD examine his own erratic behavior. For example, why he should not quit his job because someone looked at him in the wrong way, or why he should pay his rent instead of buying a new DVD player. An advocate is not afraid to tell a person with FASD when he or she is doing something really stupid but is clever and tactful enough to say it in a way that it can be tolerated.

Benny is a recent participant in our adult program. On numerous occasions, Benny sought residential treatment for alcohol and other drug problems. At intake Benny presented himself well and told the counselors that his excessive drinking was causing all kinds of problems with relationships, money, health and run-ins with the justice system. Benny has attempted suicide on two occasions and was diagnosed with a panic disorder at one addiction centre and was expelled for 'dishonesty' at another. Through it all, the desire to quit drinking and using drugs was huge. Benny is single and has no visible means of support, couldn't pay his bills and has moved four to five times during the past year. Because of increased depression, Benny started on a downhill spiral and was admitted to a psychiatric hospital and then released to the streets without a follow-up plan.

Continued Next Page (Pg. 9)



# SCUTTLEBUTT



## Staring into the Abyss

"Sometimes when you stare into the abyss, the abyss stares back"

- Friedrich Nietzsche

I have been known to call myself "The Third Most Hated Man In Edmonton" even though it's not true. At times it's because I will act without regard to my own popularity, other times as the set up for a punch line ("I'll be number one but not everybody knows me."). For now the reason is the amount of self-loathing, I have generated makes it feel appropriate. The actions I am taking now will certainly lose me friends, including my best friend, and still I feel justified. I am (in the words of the last woman I truly loved) "a horrible, horrible man."

I met Beth over a year-and-a-half ago. A young woman nearly half my age who once felt that by taking her in I had saved her life. I now feel that I may have cost her that life. Everyone else who I talk to reassures me that it all would have happened anyway.

Beth came to me last December to tell me something that she had been hiding from her boyfriend, a lad a year younger than her — God-fearing and a non-smoker, drinker or drug user. Rolling up her sleeves she showed me both her arms, bruised blue with over a dozen needle marks a side. "I shot coke with P\_\_\_ and I really liked it. I know I am going to do it again."

I asked her how often she had done this and her answer of only twice made me incredulous. There were too many "tracks" and some

had obviously been healing longer than others. Fearing for her safety I wished I could ask her to stop, but at the time I was living (platonically) with Kate\*, a young HIV-positive prostitute and smoking crack cocaine on a regular, though not consistent basis. The pot would have been calling the kettle black.

Instead, feeling all I could do was more along the lines of harm reduction, I suggested she either smoke or snort instead of "shooting up" and risking Hep C, HIV or other side-effect illnesses. With my living conditions as they were, she ended up trying crack.

Big surprise. She liked it.

Beth's third use of the drug about three weeks after her confession irrevocably changed our relationship. Till then she was my best friend, a young woman who treated me as a second father to the point she had asked me to give her away at her wedding. That night, wearing only my tattered house coat, thrown open revealing her nubile body, she began masturbating and telling me how she wanted me. Within a half hour, as her boyfriend slept in my apartment, I had Beth bent over the dryer in the laundry room having what the Church calls: "carnal relations".

I should have known better, or at least had one eye glued to our future. Back in the early nineteen eighties, cocaine had been my gateway drug to prostitution. In fact I would do yet one more trick as her use and mine of crack would get out of control. But that was months away. We would both be swept away by the storm before that event.

By March, Beth and I were sharing a house, with Kate as a constant guest. Access to crack was immediate and Beth and Kate would frequently be calling up "dial-a-dealers" to the front of our house. It wasn't long before Kate brought a customer by, a man about my age, and in return for crack, Beth and I enter-

tained him, Beth having sex with us both.

The next day, I knew I had pimped her but Beth dismissed it all as "just fun". I, using that addict's reasoning that blinds you to the truth, continued to play along. I held to her position that it wasn't prostitution, as she was not taking money. In fact all we were doing was cutting out the middleman. I was to my knowledge the only one of us that ever took money when (surprisingly) we did not find ourselves short for April's rent. I relived a torrent of horrors from the past. Beth didn't even blink.

Of course all this activity couldn't escape the notice of our neighbours, especially those in the Community Action Project, or CAP. I suppose that after their efforts to shut down the Cloisters Apartment Block, our residence seemed like the next windmill to joust. In truth the next real dragon was down the way on 95th St. — The Piazza Italia Senior's Home.

Now before I go on let me elucidate how this next part of my story may well place me in harm's way. Most people in little Italy will tell you that an Edmonton Mafia family is a myth. Well this "myth" once threatened a very real owner of a very real Automated Teller Company. This "myth" may also support the goings on at the Piazza Italia. When I contacted management of this senior's home, I was given the journalist's nightmare quote - "no comment".

One morning after a particularly extreme crack binge in late April, Beth asked Kate to take her to Fred's, a resident of Piazza Italia. I knew what Fred was up to, buying crack for sex and pleasure of the young women who work their trade in Little Italy, other residents often coming by to join the party. He would call our place often looking for Kate. At this time I don't know for sure if it was Beth's first visit. Either way, Kate told me how that day she had sex with both Fred and an oriental gentleman.

Eventually I exploded, though I was unaware that the anger was for myself and what I had done, allowed, I took it out on Beth. She moved out shortly afterwards and for a time we remained friends, her coming over at times to still smoke crack with Kate or myself.

Of course Beth and I only had sex once after this. The last time we "hotted up", despite the porno video playing and her wearing nothing but a leather vest and a g-string, I had lost almost all my desire for her. I couldn't feel good about it. I even did the one thing most men can never do. I turned off the porno.

Still I thought she had given up exchanging sex for crack, sliding away from prostitution. Then, after the last time I did crack, with her there, she covertly asked Kate to take her back to Fred's. That's when I knew the extent of the damage I had caused.

Perhaps if she hadn't lied to me about it or Kate had told me, maybe if Fred had answered honest when I asked him, I wouldn't have rated her out to her family or the few residents of the Piazza Italia in this little piece of bad literature. Either way I have no regrets, even if Fred's threats on my life (one of which is saved on my answering machine and sent to a third party) come about. I may have shown, Hell! I opened the door to her for crack ho'in', but I sure as hell will work like Satan himself to close it. Still the genie's out of the bottle now.

Kate has probably written me off, Fred and the "myth" will probably want me dead and Beth will never again look on me as a father figure again. I am sure that to them I am despised. Still it's leaps and bounds behind the loathing I feel for myself.

The Third Most Hated Man In Edmonton indeed.

- Dave Dutton-Fraser

"Battle not with monsters lest you become a monster yourself." - Friedrich Nietzsche

## FASD Continued from Pg. 8

When Benny came to Well Community - Well Families, arrangements were made for him to have a neuro-psychological assessment where he was diagnosed with FASD and assigned to an advocate. After establishing safe housing, an after-care plan was designed to meet his needs. Benny was very compliant once he understood his cognitive disabilities and need for special support. He is now settled in his new home, attends AA meetings regularly, has qualified for AISH because of his disability and works at two jobs, gradually learning to take responsibility for his finances. He has developed a hobby — crocheting — and he does it beautifully. However, he lives 'on the edge of panic' every day and is vulnerable to any change in his regular routine and with the exception of one relapse; he has been sober for 9 months now. His situation is still precarious but being diagnosed with FASD was definitely the turning point in Benny's life and the successful web of services and supports set in place by WCWF permit him to break out of the pattern of dysfunctional behaviors that had previously made it impossible for him to get his life under control.

Benny's story shows that a seemingly hopeless situation can be turned around when someone takes the responsibility for getting them through the diagnostic process and then using this information to structure after-care needs with a long term support worker rather than taking a 'transition' approach to after-care.

People with FASD, because of their inherent brain dysfunction, place certain demands on their environments. When these demands are understood and met, they can function fairly well. When their needs are not met, their behaviors can become out of control, bizarre, impulsive, desperate and dysfunctional. Diagnosis, structure, support and empathy - they're a dynamite combination!

For everyone affected by prenatal alcohol exposure, we have four wishes:

1. That they receive a diagnosis early in life;
2. That they are raised in a loving, stable, structured family or a supported setting that will use their knowledge about the diagnosis to create a safety net in the community;
3. That the responses and expectations of his or her family are based on an understanding of that person's own unique needs at each developmental stage and;
4. That all people with FASD be given the tools to develop to the best of their abilities into productive adults, living with whatever degree of support is appropriate for them.

- Well Communities - Well Families

ABYSS A

The abyss of desire is difficult to fill.

CHINESE PROVERB



# SCUTTLE

## Bright Lights in the Inner City

L LIGHTS

We waste our **lights** in vain, like lamps by day.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



### Inspirational People from the Heart of E-Town

**A**re there any? Oh yes, many, and Jan Przysiecki, PhD, age 40, apartment dweller in the east Boyle Street area shines brightly among them, but in a fluorescent glow, mind you. None of the wastefulness of incandescent bulbs for Jan. And his fluorescents are apt to be powered by a solar panel. That would be the same one that powers his razor, recharges the batteries used in some of his work, and runs his blender.

No, wait, that last one's wrong. It's his bike, converted to a stationary model, that cranks a generator and powers the blender - Jan pedalling furiously. "I'm getting more and more orders for my handcrafted paper, so with all this pedalling, I'm getting really fit."

Explanation? The blender could, and has, whipped up soy-milk shakes at ecological fairs, but here in his one-room apartment/workshop, it beats to a pulp the recycled materials Jan uses to make his handcrafted specialty papers. Paper for gift or business cards, or special announcements, or treasured diaries, or CD cover slips - paper, just one of several trash-crafted products Jan manufactures and sells, whether in response to direct customer orders, or through the Earth's General Store and the Red Strap Market.

I'd say, "Can you believe this guy?!" only I don't talk like that. But, maybe I should learn, because, I mean, can you believe this guy? Give a listen...

- When I was a kid I was always fascinated by the value of things in the

garbage...walking by peoples garbage and thinking, "That's so cool...what could I do with that? Throwing it away, that's such a waste."

- I was maybe six or seven years old. It wasn't an intellectual thing. It was an intuitive grasp. [When asked how he acted on that intuition at such a young age...] Actually, most of my attempts at that age were destructive, disassembling things - watches, motors - learning how to be very patient with intricate mechanisms, and painfully learning that you have to figure out how they might go back together before you take them apart. Part of that is understanding what they're for and how they work in the first place.

- That served me well in grad school [Jan has a PhD in zoology, though for various reasons he has cut his formal ties with the academic world] where I learned even more about intricate systems and what's involved in preserving their integrity.

- My dad was a farmer from east Poland. He was a WWII refugee from a generation that learned how to scrimp and save. It was common to that generation, and some of that has rubbed off on me. That sense of economy is not really an exceptional way to think. Three quarters of the world thinks that way; they have no choice - we're the exception. Mom and dad worked a farm, living off the land in ways that were respectful, sustainable, rather than exploitative. Any farmer has the same experience. [Hmmm...does this remain true of the modern farmer or agro-businessman?]

- The fact that I marvelled at garbage, probably came from my dad noticing,





# THE BUTT

"Hey, look at this" when we were out walking. And I remember when we went camping. For him it was organizing the wilderness in ways that we could use. A stump that would serve as a chair, a rock that we could spread lunch on and use as a table. Looking at the world and finding shapes that would serve...designing with the environment, rather than against it.

As a teenager, at a time when very few people had even heard of composting, Jan started a composter at home using leaves, grass clippings, food scraps. In high school, he got into recycling paper in the form of making his own. He found good support for his projects, and his parents and friends were supportive. "No, there was no problem; no one minded - it was just that people didn't think of these things."

Jan loves the pace of walking and cycling, and living more deliberately in general. He recognizes that to live as he does, making much of the wherewithal of his everyday life himself (as a small sampling, his own furniture, even his own vitamin C from rosehips) requires changing and slowing the pace of one's life, but that's all for the better as he sees it. Indeed, that seems to be Jan's political philosophy. Choose a different pace of life, which means way of life. Do it, find others doing the same, support one another, and it will matter. That's how to change the world. The secret is in doing the small things you can, not in trying to overwhelm the big things you can't. Obviously for Jan, personal statement is huge - just doing the things you can and letting people see.

To me, Jan is a kind of urban Thoreau - justifiably proud, independent, responsible, paying his way while using the earth lovingly. In that vein, Jan continues...

- Why rush to a show that's going to start late anyhow? Slow down. But slow down slowly, don't beat yourself up over it. Make small changes. The choices add up. I gave up my career in academics and now I work where I'm not trained for any of the things that I do. It was a shift from an attitude of "I'll get what I want" to "I'll use what I've got."

- Happiness doesn't have to come from how much stuff you have. There's a planning part of your brain that says I won't be happy till...you've got to step away from that and learn to respect what you've got...to think that's okay...I can be happy here now...I'm proud with where I'm at.

Often, the poor  
are good  
environmentalists.  
Compared to many  
other people, their  
ecological footprint  
is minimal. They  
have to scrimp and  
save, because they  
have so little to  
work with, but I try  
not to think too  
much about that. I  
mean the immense  
wastefulness of  
the rest of us. I try  
instead to focus on  
just doing stuff in  
my life that shows  
what can be done.

- Am I completely happy? Well, sometimes I feel like I'm not equipped to be. But I'm happy at Earth's General Store and my other job, trash crafting, and paying my bills. Happy having no car, cycling, walking, living frugally, maybe too much so. The only desire for more is a place with a bit more room for my work area. I'd like to make trash crafting my complete means of livelihood. Happy whenever I see...I like to see environmental ideas trickle up to the mainstream from the eco-margins.

- I see myself as filling the hole in the donut. The inner city is the hole. The Red Strap Market contributes to making a healthy downtown. We need to foster inner city development with places like Red Strap, small businesses, art galleries, community gardens. Gentrification is a problem. But, at least say "Hi" to the homeless. At least, be welcoming. It's nice to see that kind of scavenging going on. The homeless are necessarily frugal.

- Often, the poor are good environmentalists. Compared to many other people, their ecological footprint is minimal. They have to scrimp and save, because they have so little to work with, but I try not to think too much about that. I mean the immense wastefulness of the rest of us. I try instead to focus on just doing stuff in my life that shows what can be done.

- I don't watch T.V., or listen to the radio, read the newspapers...I'm trying to keep my sanity. Keeping track of all that just paralyzes me with hopelessness. I feel like I have no power in the political arena - my vote counts for nothing - so I just live right and show it. I model things and the idea is it's okay, steal my ideas, please.

- Maybe I'm just too impatient for politics. Things move so slowly. I need feedback. I need to see that I'm doing something, having an effect. A politician maybe can read the clues that shows she's getting or he's getting something done. I don't see those clues...the feedback that allows a politician to keep going.

Nonetheless, he obviously sees something that keeps him going...and going...and going! What ingenuity! I've mentioned the solar panel and the bicycle-generator running appliances in his apartment. Well, add the laminated cardboard furniture he makes from recycled packing

boxes. (I sat in a super comfortable cardboard chair as I scratched down these notes.) Add the rest of his furniture made from scrap lumber, metal, you name it. A desk the drawer of which slides on runners shaped from coat hanger wire, the legs are heavy cardboard packing tubes. His CD rack made from discarded bike forks with the bicycle spokes curved to hold the CD's. Flutes made out of discarded metal tubing, a one-string bass of 2x4; the string is a bicycle brake cable, the sound box a bicycle wheel over which a used nylon cloth has been stretched; baskets woven from multicoloured nylon bundling straps collected at loading docks; bracelets handmade from polished bicycle spoke nipples strung on gear shift cable.

On his wall hangs a mirror pulled from the reflecting surface of a discarded copying machine. The mirror frame is from other parts of the machine, and all is artfully bound together using the coloured wiring stripped from the copier's circuitry. So there's an intro to Jan's apartment and Jelly Parrot Trash Crafts, as he calls his business. All products 99-100% reclaimed/recycled by weight.

Oh, did I mention he participates in a nearby community garden where he manages the plot assignments and runs the composter?

Conclusion? Can you believe this guy?

For example, could you live in Jan's environment/living space/apartment? Likely, you say no, but I say hold on - I think you could. Because the trash crafting creates its own aesthetic. In artistic or design terms individually rough, and perhaps, taken singly, some pieces unattractive, but summing to something precious and pleasing, because it all works so well and has its own "I did this and it is good" (or as a customer, "I choose this and it is good") intimacy. The whole creates its own weather so-to-speak. And the weather's fine.

A poster on his wall reads: Live slower, deeper. Avoid oil. Forget war. Can you believe this guy? Sure you can. In fact, I think we're reaching a point where we'd all do well to believe him...well, maybe just a bit. You know, start slowly, don't beat yourself up over it. Make small changes. The choices add up.

- Fabian Jennings

Jelly Parrot Trash Crafts 428-9495 Jan Przysiezniak

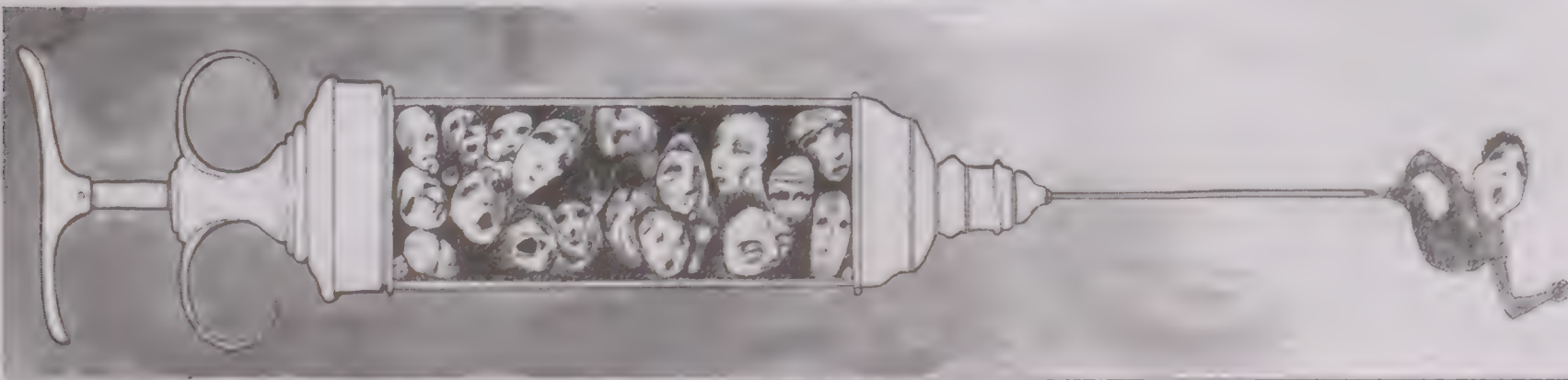
Red Strap Market 10305 97th St. (former Army-Navy Dept. Store) Tues. - Sun, 11-5

Earth's General Store 10832 80th Ave., 2nd floor, Mon.-Sat, 10 AM -5:30 PM, Sun., 1-5 PM.

LIGHTS

Turn up the lights;  
I don't want to go  
home in the dark

O. HENRY





# SCUTTLEBUTT

**L** LIGHTS



## Green is as Green Does

Humility like darkness reveals the heavenly lights. The shadows of poverty and meanness gather around us, "and lo! creation widens to our view."

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Preserving the beauty and richness of the natural environment, and even ensuring that it continues to support life, has only recently become an imperative and has still not entered the consciousness of many. However, the number of individuals who are aware of the consequences of ecological decline is a vast and growing number. Such is the nature and size of the problem that the effort has evolved into a worldwide movement.

For a movement of this magnitude to be successful and fundamentally change the way societies operate requires a social, a spiritual and a political component.

The social component of the movement is already well established and manifests in the plethora of groups working at every level to halt and reverse the assault by us, homo sapiens, on GAIA (The Earth Goddess or Mother Nature). Whether it be a small, local group pushing such issues as recycling, biking or composting, or large international groups such as Greenpeace or World Wildlife Fund (WWF), they are all essential to the ultimate aim of trying to make the human race compatible with the natural eco-systems that keep us alive and healthy.

The renowned ecology philosopher Thomas Berry once said that the environmental movement would only be effective

if it became a religious movement. Based on the evidence that all indigenous (or paganistic, if you like) religions worshiped the earth and the fruit of the earth in one way or another, Berry was probably saying that we must regain the reverence and respect we have lost since the scientific enlightenment. Also, there is much evidence that modern religions in their early days had a quite different conception of human relationships to the earth and the other creatures inhabiting it. The early Gnostic Christians had a radically different worldview than subsequent followers of Christ.

So, there is much to work with and develop in the social and religious spheres of environmentalism, but what of the political?

The Green Party is the political arm of the environmental movement and exists in over 100 countries, has elected members in 30 and participates in the governing of 7. It is, in fact, the largest political force on the planet when compared to any other political entity. Not a bad track record considering the first Green Party only came into existence some 32 years ago in New Zealand [www.greens.org.nz/about/history](http://www.greens.org.nz/about/history). Clearly, there exists a profound, worldwide need to confront ecological issues, which is not going to go away.

So, why are there no Greens elected to

government is dear old liberal, secular, democratic, multi-racial, peace-loving Canada? The answer is almost exclusively because of the antiquated electoral system we share with Britain and the United States.

We adopted a system of electing our representatives from Britain now nicknamed a "First Past The Post" or FPTP system. The FPTP system of electing representatives is also called a "winner take all" type system in which a candidate in a riding can be elected by a ridiculously low percentage of the electorate, and often is. Outcomes of the FPTP system are seldom pretty and give whopping majorities to parties who frequently fail to obtain 50% of the overall vote. We live in a province where this distortion has historically been the norm resulting in the illusion that the provincial conservatives have total support of the citizenry. Those distortions are even worse in neighbouring BC. More information on electoral alternatives (called Proportional Representation, and used by the vast majority of the democratic world), can be found at [www.fairvote-canada.org/fvc/AboutFairVoting](http://www.fairvote-canada.org/fvc/AboutFairVoting).

With proportional representation the percentage of votes equals the percentage of seats. The major impact of FPTP voting on the average citizen is to cause her to vote against a party or candidate rather than for one she really likes (called strategic voting). Consequently we hear much about votes being "wasted" and the futility of voting and, indeed, this is why we seldom see growth by new parties in Canada.

In the waning months of his mandate Jean Chrétien instigated a few excellent programs. Perhaps this was to enhance his legacy, but who cares if they were good? The list includes the ratification of Kyoto, refusal to join the war in Iraq and, most important for improved democracy, party financing reform.

The change in finance reform of political parties is nothing short of revolutionary and could only be topped by introducing proportional representation. The main component of this Bill is that parties are now to be financed by the electorate, not the wealthy, trade unions or corporate sponsors. This will ensure that politicians are no longer beholden to the self-interested entities that financed them. The major positive factor at election time and beyond is that the voter will now be voting for a party and assisting them fiscally. The perception that anyone voting for a party other than the winner was "throwing away" his vote, no longer applies.

The Green Party of Canada, standing at 5% nationally in the polls, is set to make the leap from an emerging party to a major player in the political arena. After the next election the already rapid adoption of policies from all parties on environmental issues will hit overdrive since the Greens will be at their heels on each and every issue. None other than former Reform Party leader Preston Manning said recently to a group of business leaders that environment was "vote winner".

So, in the next election, please consider giving the Greens your support and having the issues you care so much about, at last, properly addressed, not green-washed.

- Green Party of Canada

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If you have a business or service and would like to reach an educated, socially-conscious segment of Edmonton, try advertising in *Our Voice*. Call Ron at 423-2285 ext. 139 to discuss our reasonable rates.

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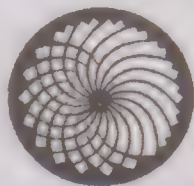
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# SCUTTLEBUTT



## Health Care in Crisis

The issues of health care in Alberta often hit a very troublesome area — the area of Medications, Pharmacy services and the future of the medicines that we get or can expect to get in the health care system in Alberta

Currently, there is a payment system that seems to be increasing exponentially over the last 20 years: That is people in the Province of Alberta are paying more than ever for prescriptions, and medications, that they are getting, and they are getting less and less with each passing year. This seems to be diametrically at odds with the fact that this is supposed to be the richest province in Canada. Many prescriptions are not covered or only covered in part and this can result in a cost of several hundreds of dollars for AISH, Supports for Independence, and the elderly (who have always been hit the hardest).

**Fact 1:** The majority of mental health patients cannot afford their medications, and are not getting prescriptions or the proper medications due to a certain amount of indirect, subtle and or other control on the doctors. The issue of forcing patients to take medications is one that can never be fully carried out by a government without exorbitant costs, and the excessive erosion of human rights.

**Fact 2:** The medications that people are being prescribed are interlinked to a dangerous degree of Kickback for the industry and for the patient pharmacy provider. Why is that? Well, the medications that are prescribed for a patient such as one on A.I.S.H. (disabled income in Alberta) can be taken to a pharmacy such as Save-On's and this pharmacy will give an A.I.S.H. patient an illegal kickback. What is that kickback? That kickback is Air Mileage credits which are not given by other legal and or ethical pharmacies such as the medicine shoppe. What does this kickback do? The giving of mileage credits for those who get their prescriptions at such pharmacies constitutes a form of "free meal supplied to those using government monies to buy their medicines" This raises the costs of medications for everyone in the longrun, and is no more legal than the giving of a free trip to a policeman

who is purchasing the radar system for Edmonton out of public funds. I feel that the Attorney General should prosecute Save-On or other similar pharmacies for this infringement and violation, which affects all of us in Alberta.

**Fact 3:** Many cancer patients and those with severe pain and dying, are now not getting an appropriate triplicate for pain medication and being treated in a humane fashion. Why is that? The effect of the drug market and the changing availabilities of drugs within Canada and the control by the Colleges of Medicine of each of the provinces are causing a severe constraint and restraint amongst doctors. Doctors are nervous about prescribing proper medicine for severely ill or dying patients because "they might be investigated". The doctors are afraid to do what is right for the patients because the College of Physicians is keeping too tight a lid on all of the doctors and using triplicates as a way to control the numbers of physicians so that the amount of monies earned can be increased for other upper-echelon physicians. Doctors tell me that they are afraid to prescribe what they know is right for the patient no matter how much they know that those patients are suffering. As a result, a handful of physicians prescribe huge amounts of restrictive drugs for a profit, and because they are largely able to get away with it through the lack of policing and monitoring and many, many other patients continue to suffer because the honest doctors are afraid of the "Big stick of the college" and afraid to lose their license or be accused of prescribing too many triplicate drug prescriptions, that are highly monitored! Honestly if a patient is in severe pain and there is a proven need, I really do not understand why the College would seek to intimidate all of its physicians as they have done and continue to do [a virtual human rights violation of an international order], and why they do not investigate the lack of proper and necessary prescribing for a patient in severe pain, and in danger of suicide etc from that pain. It is my belief that the lady that was killed in Winnipeg this last week by her husband and who had cancer was killed as a mercy killing because she

was in severe pain. When I called the hospital there in Winnipeg- they did not deny that this was possible!.. What a sad state of affairs!

**Fact 4:** Many of the severely ill people in Alberta on AISH which is believed by most people in Alberta to cover all of their medical needs, drugs and supplies — no longer covers many to most of those needs. C.G. a person who had been on AISH is currently just one of many told that he cannot get his ointments, many medicines, special shoes for his foot and orthopedic problems and has to sell papers and look to all sources to get the extra \$1,900.00 that on the average he has to pay out of his own pocket each year for his foot problem which is the reason that he is on AISH. He actually must stand to sell "Our Voice", and worsen his AISH related disability in order to get the necessary money for supplies for his AISH disability. The Klein government keeps cutting back what he gets covered, and he keeps getting into worse and worse medical problems. He is not the only one, there are thousands of others in similar situations, not to mention those people in wheelchairs who find that Klein has stopped the payment for batteries for the motorized wheelchairs that are needed by some disabled. Many of these people absolutely cannot afford them, and worse still, they can do no work at all, even selling the "Our Voice" to fund their batteries.

**Fact 5:** The Federal government ( not Klein or the provincial government ) is affecting the price and availability of all drugs to all people in the province — has extended the moratorium on popular generic medications from 5 years initially to the period of 20 years — and this is increasing the cost and or availabilities of these medications to the Canadian public.[Americans saving money by buying their prescriptions at cheaper rates in Canada is also affecting the supply and cost to Canadians.]

**Fact 6:** The physicians are still getting what is the equivalent of kickbacks from the pharmaceutical companies, in that many of them still invite the doctors to such things as a cruise and offer a two for one ( with one person free) on a so called pharmaceutical medical seminar cruise — inspiring the doctors to overprescribe the medications which that company or drug company produces since they are kind enough to give a free cruise to a family member of the doctor! (kickback) They are getting free cruises, free trips and the patients are paying the costs. Not too long ago, The physicians at many psychiatric Hospitals and or practices were significantly increasing their salaries and or incomes by the use of drugs that are still in the testing stage for the pharmaceutical companies. [Is that not as bad as the police who are alleged to be getting a free trip to Las Vegas for their purchasing and involvement in the radar system installations in Edmonton?] Once again the Canadian Attorney General should be prosecuting these drug companies for these absolute blatant KICKBACKS ! THESE ARE THE FACTS WHICH ARE AFFECTING US ALL, AND INCREASING THE PRICE OF MEDICATIONS TO ALL OF THE PUBLIC! TIME FOR A CHANGE.

- Cindy Smith

### Let your voice be heard!

CRISIS **C**

Would you like to tell your story to Edmonton?

Are there things that happened to you that you think affect others as well?

Should other people know what's going on?

Send your story to

[wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org](mailto:wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org)

or come see the

*Our Voice*  
editor at the  
Bissell Centre,  
10527 - 96th  
Street.

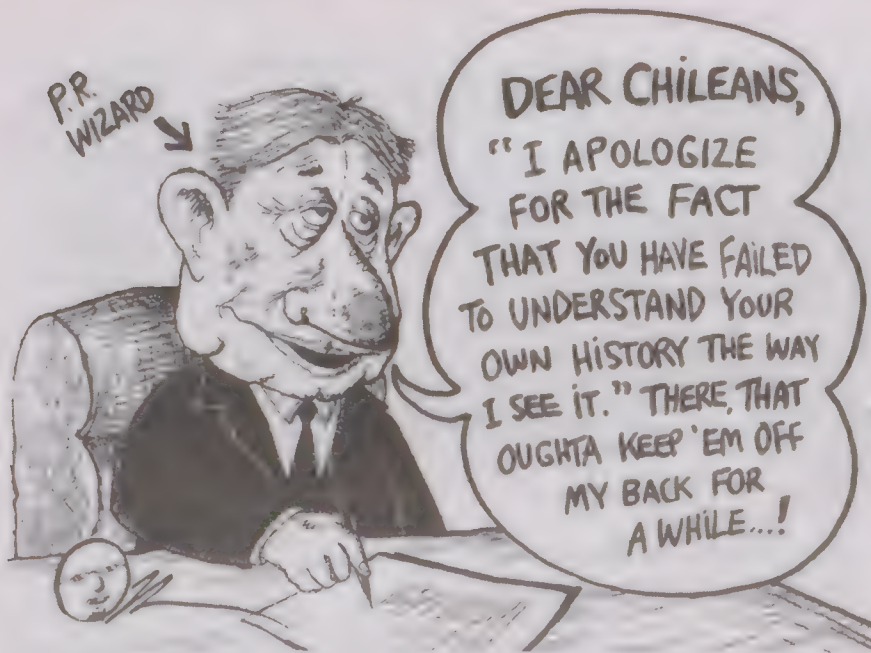
The easiest period in a crisis situation is actually the battle itself. The most difficult is the period of indecision—whether to fight or run away. And the most dangerous period is the aftermath. It is then, with all his resources spent and his guard down, that an individual must watch out for dulled reactions and faulty judgment

Crisis can indeed be an agony. But it is the exquisite agony which a man might not want to experience again—yet would not for the world have missed.

RICHARD M. NIXON



# SCUTTLEBUTT



U UGLY

am not ugly  
I'm cute as hell

CHRISTINE CRAFT

## THE UGLY ALBERTAN

Let's define what ugliness really looks like. You're having a conversation with a friend, over dinner. Your friend is ordering a big fat steak and a bigger, fatter lobster and then jokes that he likely won't even touch the lobster but it's just fun to order BIG STUFF... and besides, the size of the bill doesn't matter. "The company's paying for it," he snickers. "We're talking business, right?"

Actually, what you're talking about is public auto insurance. Your friend, who is wearing a button that says "Privatize everything," means that implementing such a thing would be a slippery slope to Socialism, then Communism, and then the murder and torture of fellow Albertans. "Well, look at what happened in Chile when Pinochet was forced into a military coup against that Allende guy," he says.

You wonder: does my friend empathize with a brutal dictator? Does he support murder, torture and other forms of terror? You gulp and think: is this person really my friend?

NEWSFLASH TO ALBERTANS: Ralph Klein is not your friend. Especially if you are a Chilean-Canadian. When the Premier of Alberta used a debate on public auto insurance as a platform for saying that General Augusto Pinochet was "forced" to carry out a military coup against Socialist President Salvador Allende on September 11th, 1973 in Chile, it's not surprising that Chilean-Canadians were offended.

On a sadly cold Monday May 10th, many Chilean-Canadians and those sympathetic to their cause gathered at the Alberta

Legislature. Most of the protesters present had specific goals. They wanted Klein to meet with them and to offer an apology. Others were more proactive and simply wanted Klein to resign from public office NOW.

As the chanting went: "Klein resign! Klein resign!"

"We are here today because Mr. Klein compared the nationalization of the natural resources of Chile with insurance. It is a big mistake to make a comparison like that," said Daonicio Darveves, a Chilean who has lived in Canada for over 20 years and came here to escape the consequences of living under the Pinochet Regime.

"My family suffered," Darveves said tearfully. "I have an uncle who disappeared. My brother was in prison and was tortured. I was in prison. I was tortured. There are thousands of people who were killed because someone opposed their views. Suppose that Mr. Klein, because we have different views than he does, sends an army to kill us! Pinochet was that kind of person!"

What bothered Darveves and many other Chilean-Canadians at the rally is the mere idea that a political leader in a democratic nation can make such simplistic remarks about the complex politics of a foreign country and not be held accountable. "Belonging to a democratic country means that we can have different ideas. Diversity is very important. We are people who think," he said. "Mr. Klein does not have a clear vision of the history of our country."

Here are some facts: President Allende was a socialist who led a seven-party coalition

government, the Popular Unity. Under this coalition (which included the Chilean communist party), there was freedom of the press and social programs for poor children. As well, the first constitutional act of this sovereign government - unanimously supported by elected houses, congress and the senate - was the nationalization of Chile's natural resources. International companies based in the U.S. were, under international law, offered fair compensation and did not accept the deal.

In an Open Letter to the Premier of Alberta, Victor M. Gavilan - a Board Member of the Chilean-Canadian Community Association of Calgary - writes: "September 11th, 1973 in Chile, a group of high-ranking officers, representing all four national defense disciplines, violated the Chilean Political Constitution by obeying the U.S. State Department's orders and created a self-appointed Military Government (Junta) assuming control of the Chilean State. Augusto Pinochet was the instrument used by the American government to illegally remove President Allende from power. Under the Pinochet regime... human rights were destroyed, free speech, the right to vote, and the right to free association vanished. Thousands were removed from their homes, work and schools and confined to concentration camps."

Kevin Taft, leader of the Alberta Liberal party, was present at the initial debate with Klein over public auto insurance and at the rally. Appearing stunned and baffled by Klein's recent behaviour, Taft said, "Canada is a country that prides itself on welcoming people from all parts of the world and weaving them into the Canadian fabric. I find the Premier's comments to be offensive and bizarre and even more so I find his refusal to provide an explanation or an apology a confirmation that he does not have the respect for Canadians and for democracy that we should demand of any political leader."

"Klein is simply exposing the man that he has always been," said Malcolm Azania (a.k.a. CJSR FM's "Minister Faust"), who has recently plunged into the world of politics as NDP candidate for MP in Old Strathcona, also present at the rally. "He is arrogant. He has a lack of history. He doesn't appreciate the meaning of politics because he rules as a virtual dictator in this province."

The sad fact is that our Premier believes that he speaks to the average "Martha and Henry" of Alberta... and, in a way, he does. What's ugly about this province of plenty is that many of us relish in the thought of living large, of eating steak and lobster and throwing the other half away because the company's paying for it anyway. Is that why this man will get elected until he's an old man gumming porridge while U.S. companies continue to gobble up what's left of our key industries?

Chileans saw their freedoms, friends and family members disappear. They know what it's like to fight for their democratic freedoms. Do Albertans?

-Mark Kozub

### Ralph ... Buddy ... I thought you stopped drinking!

Ralph Klein is becoming more and more perplexing every single day. If I landed here from abroad and I saw Ralph on TV, I would assume that he was a cartoon character developed by an opposition party for my amusement. Ralph went into an utterly confusing tirade in the legislature recently when discussing public auto insurance. Somehow, Ralph found a way to portray Pinochet as someone who was forced to mount a coup to replace Chilean Leader Salvador Allende in 1973. Why would anyone try to base an argument on the actions of a human rights monster like Pinochet? Why would anyone try to fit this into his statements on car insurance? Pinochet is not really the kind of guy you want to throw into the mix of your argument even if your argument did make some kind of sense. Ralph, your argument makes no sense at all!

According to human rights agencies, Pinochet detained 250,000 people for political reasons during his reign of terror. You're not planning on detaining all those people who disagree with you, are you Ralph? Relax big guy, take a deep breath and stop saying outrageous things in public and everything will be alright.

This is not even the weirdest part. Ralph's term paper (for a communications class at Athabasca University) referred to in his ungodly rant in the legislature has been proven to be 58.7% plagiarized from the websites he listed for sources. Whole paragraphs of the paper can be found from these internet sources. For the love of all that is good, if you are going to write a term paper in an hour or less, don't list "Internet" as your source and don't leave something like this open to public scrutiny. This whole public embarrassment was more than avoidable. No one would ever know about this bit of plagiarizing if Ralph didn't hand it to us on a silver platter. So, from me to you Ralph, thanks a lot, keep it up!

- Warren Bjarnason

when the bough breaks • eric uhlich www.thelampshade.ca





# SUBVERSES

## TWO OF EVERYTHING... AND ONE

A saying goes that, "We have two ears and one mouth, so we can hear and learn twice as much as we talk."

Much of the time my mini mammoth mouth was full of gin and vermouth  
And that made it difficult to walk.

Two nostrils with one nose in one head with little-used brains  
Two light legs carrying me where no one knows,  
Strong enough to carry one body when it rains.

Two arms attached to two hands, one time tried like a Cessna 180 to carry a large load.

Two light legs with sinew strung to two feet that scratched some sands and one bony bum that occasionally landed like a toad.

Two eyes assisted by one pair of bifocals, making it easy to read the newspaper. Like most of the male locals, I was blessed with two nut-like thingamajigs shackled up with my one peter.

-Ernie Ballandine

## WELCOME TO ALBERTA

Welcome to Alberta  
Make sure you bring lots and lots of money

Cause being broke here is not funny  
In winter it gets to 30 below  
When you have no place to go  
Welcome to Alberta

Welcome to Alberta  
A pawn shop and liquor store on every corner  
Legal betting and gambling awaiting you  
Where are you?  
When every pocket and wallet is through  
Welcome to Alberta

Welcome to Alberta  
Hope you enjoyed our hospitality  
Bus ticket outta here is free  
Cause burns and poor people we don't need  
Big business and corporation's we have to feed  
Hope you enjoyed your stay  
Ralph Klein will show you on your way

-Robert Brooks

## IN AND OUT OF THE ARMS OF JUNE

When things and people get me down  
I find myself wearing a sad troubled frown  
And yet I want to feel and act the clown  
An exterior show, on the inside I may drown  
It occurs to me to look up to the moon  
Smell the roses, smile or sing a tune  
Take a trip to Regina or Saskatoon  
Or take refuge in the arms of June

She has been a single mom for a long time  
Had troubles plenty and dealt with some slime  
Similar to me she has had a long way to climb  
To find a home, a niche and a peaceful time.  
Some day, somewhere, somehow some night soon  
We should be humming along like a fork and spoon  
All I have to do is adjust my selfish tune  
To stay comforted in the arms of June

In past relationships I found deception and rejection  
Perhaps mistreated for which there may be an explanation  
Or even some purposefully misdirected information  
More commonly known as gossip - a powerful potion  
These things nag me and make me feel alone  
Most people do things for which they should atone  
But no matter how long troubles stay, oh how soon  
They vanish when I am in the arms of June

Life is sometimes short, so say some soothsayers,  
and things pass.

While I drove taxis in P.A. Saskatchewan,  
June cooked café meals in a dash  
She'd look after her kin and we would share our cash  
Then suddenly she slipped out of sight in a flash  
Apparently, she had a go with  
Al Cohol with her smiling sash  
Although I still say she had class  
When she climbed in my cab with Al Cohol  
and his fearsome flash  
I felt frustration, deception, rejection  
and no longer wanted that piece of ass

- Ernie Ballandine

## MEMORIES OF A ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

At the age of six I took a stroll  
To a one room school  
where I did enrol  
Everywhere I looked, to me  
it was all new  
There was seating for a class of 42  
I saw many shelves where the books were stored

At the front of the room was  
a large blackboard  
The class consisted of grades one to four

The seats and desk were anchored  
to the hardwood floor  
After looking things over a  
nd taking stock

Throughout the room was the ticking  
of the regulator clock

There was no time to look out the  
window at birds and trees  
When the order of the day was to  
learn the three R's and A B C's

There was no time to  
day dream or to drool  
While under the teacher's watchful  
eye and strict rule

At times I failed to heed what the  
teacher had said  
It all changed with a tap of the  
pointer on my head

There were times when I was forced  
to shed a tear  
While feeling the bite of the  
yardstick on my rear  
As the year went by many  
lessons I learned

I was pleased with the passing  
marks I earned

In later years as I think back about  
learning the rule

While relating my stories from memories of a one room school

- John Babcock

POETRY

P

**Poetry** is the most direct and simple means of expressing oneself in words: the most primitive nations have **poetry**, but only quite well developed civilizations can produce good prose. So don't think of **poetry** as a perverse and unnatural way of distorting ordinary prose statements: prose is a much less natural way of speaking than **poetry** is. If you listen to small children, and to the amount of chanting and singsong in their speech, you'll see what I mean.

NORTHROP FRYE

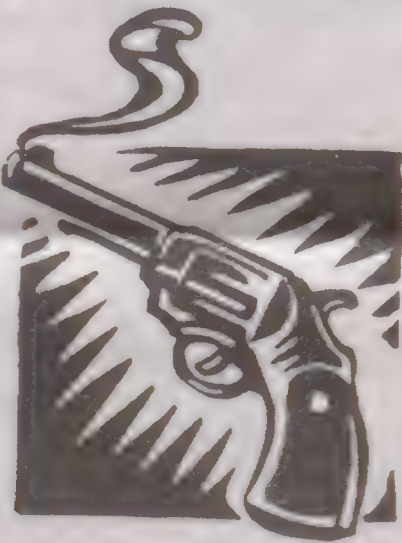


# FIBRE, FACTS & FALLACIES

**F** FIBRE

One of the oddest features of western Christianized culture is its ready acceptance of the myth of the stable family and the happy marriage. We have been taught to accept the myth not as an heroic ideal, something good, brave, and nearly impossible to fulfil, but as the very **fibre** of normal life. Given most families and most marriages, the belief seems admirable but foolhardy.

JONATHAN RABAN



## One Shot Meal

*Inexpensive meals that can be made in one pot or pan*

### Potato, Cauliflower & Chick Pea Curry

There are many fine packaged curries on the market, but try making your own out of hot chilis, garlic, ginger, cumin, fenugreek, coriander, lemongrass, turmeric or any of your favourite ingredients. A good homemade curry makes for a thoughtful gift.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 head of cauliflower, diced
- 4 large or six small potatoes, diced (also mix sweet potatoes and yams if desired)
- 1 tin of chick peas, drained and rinsed
- 1 tin of coconut milk
- 1 litre of vegetable or chicken stock. Do not use the cubes, it will make the dish intolerably salty without adding any real flavour.
- 1 package of red or green Thai curry; or Indian Vindaloo paste or Masala powder to taste. Try as many prepared curries as you like with this recipe, it will offer a com-

pletely different complexion to the dish each time. Add a small amount first, re-spice throughout the cooking process to get the right scary level of heat for you.

- 2 teaspoons of minced ginger
- 4 teaspoons of minced garlic

#### Directions:

Roast potatoes, cauliflower and chick peas in a cast iron or steel pan, or a roasting pan at 400 degrees until it starts to soften. Add the minced garlic to the roasting pan for the last five minutes of cooking. Put roasted items into a stock pot, add stock, coconut milk, ginger and some of the curry. Allow to simmer on a medium-low heat for about three hours. This process can be sped-up considerably if you are willing to stir the pot frequently, on medium-high heat.

#### Presentation:

Serve on basmati rice (well-rinsed before cooking). As a topping for each plate, try mixing some plain yogurt with cumin or a small amount of the curry with a small squeeze of lemon or a pinch of finely grated lemon zest. Try pan-frying a few pieces of naan bread (flatbread) to help scoop up your beautiful curry.

- Warren Bjarnason

## Our Vice



### Community 6.0

You know what they say, "No matter where you go there you are", and you know what? They (whoever "they" are) are abso-fricken-lutely right.

Edmonton's poor are not contained to the inner city. Not even close. We're everywhere. West end, East end, North side and yes even the South side, there's no end of us.

Which brings me to the point of...people trash-talking my neighbourhood. It has got to stop. I've heard people talking about the inner city as a harsh, scary and violent place, devoid of any positive attributes or people.

I say horse crap to that.

We are hard-working, artistic, spiritual, friendly and have something all the other pockets of poor in this city don't have...Community. Sure we have violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, inadequate housing, crappy parking, no Tim Horton's, and cockroaches the size of a mini-bus. But, when you compare all that with the poor sodders in the Stony plain rd. or 118th Ave. area we've got it pretty damn good.

#### Here's a comparison:

**Us:** If we need to hit a food bank or food services we walk a few blocks (poor little us).

**Them:** Ride a bus for anywhere from 15min to 45min to receive any kind of food services and that's if they even qualify because of where they reside.

**Us:** Want a cup o' joe and socialise a bit? Walk a couple blocks to the Bissell or the Boyle and you're good to go.

**Them:** Ride the bus all the fricken' way downtown, sit in the bar and get polluted or stay home until you have all the social skills of a toadstool.

**Us:** On average we know approximately 60% of our community members and will greet them in passing.

**Them:** They know approximately 10% of their neighbours and would be hard pressed to shake up enough urine to pee on 5% of them if they were on fire.

I could probably go on for a lot longer about the disparity between our community and their neighbourhoods, but I won't. It should be patently obvious to everyone who would stop, listen and observe.

We in our community have a lot to be thankful for in what little we do have and I'd like to think that we have qualities that these neighbourhoods could learn, adapt and incorporate into their own neighbourhoods.

But...Change is another matter.

Nuff said.

- Bruce (@#\*&%!!) Fox

### On Vice

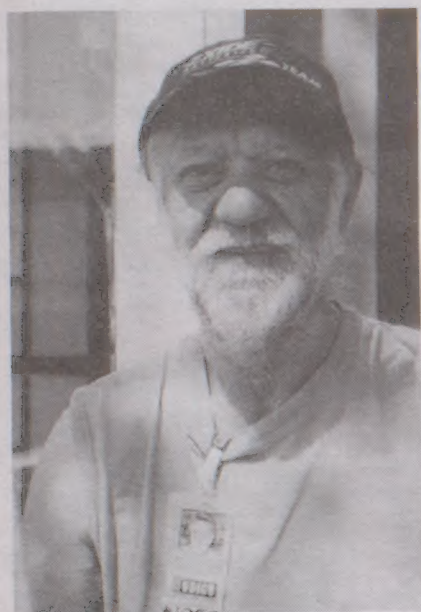
No Vice or Wickedness, which People fall into from Indulgence to Desires which are natural to all, ought to place them below the Compassion of the virtuous Part of the World; which indeed often makes me a little apt to suspect the Sincerity of their Virtue, who are too warmly provoked at other Peoples personal Sins.

- Richard Steele



# VENDOR REPUBLIC

## Vendor Profile



### Jerry Morin

**J**erry is 50 years old and was born in Edmonton, Alberta. He worked for 20 years as a finishing carpenter and for five years, worked as a radio announcer for C.F.C.W. Radio Station.

In 1973, he began experiencing blood circulation problems in his legs. Since that time, he has had seven operations, grafting veins into the main arteries of his legs. He is now ready for the eighth operation.

Jerry has been on AISH. (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped), for the past five years. About two months ago, Jerry had a verbal dispute with his newest case worker at the AISH office. As a result of this dispute, Jerry was cut off of AISH, with no money and no medical coverage at all. With no money and or no coverage Jerry was unable to get his prescription for Coumadin (Blood thinners). Jerry, knowing that a clot could form at any time, and travel to his heart and kill him, resorted to panhandling to get the money necessary to purchase the badly needed medication.

Noticing Jerry, I suggested to him that he sell the "OUR VOICE" papers while displaying the sign explaining why he needed the money. Due to the existence of many long established panhandlers in that area, it gave Jerry an advantage over them to obtain his needed funds. Jerry said: "A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE SUPPORTED HIM, HE FEELS GOOD ABOUT HAVING THE OUR VOICE PAPER TO OFFER THEM FOR THEIR SUPPORT". Jerry can be found on Whyte avenue (82nd avenue) between 104 and 105 street.

- Cecil Garfin

## Adopt a Vendor!

Our vendors are the most huggable people in the known universe. Prove us wrong people, prove us wrong!

Tell us why your vendor is all that and a bag of chips. The most colourful responses will win you some OV loot.

Send your submissions to Warren:

[wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org](mailto:wbjarnason@bissellcentre.org)

— or —

Our Voice  
c/o Bissell Centre  
10257-96 Street,  
Edmonton, Alberta,  
T5H 2H6



## Acts of Kindness

**F**or this new feature, Our Voice would like to shine the spotlight on Our Voice community member Betty Nordin, in recognition and appreciation of the acts of kindness that she has shown the Our Voice vendors. The vendors are often out selling papers at their locations so Betty knows that the best time to catch as many of the vendors as possible in one place is at the monthly vendor meetings, just before the new paper comes out. For the last couple of meetings Betty has generously given items to the vendors. A couple of months ago it was apples and oranges and last meeting Betty donated bags of strawberries as well as a bunch of cigarettes. The fruit was gratefully eaten up and the cigarettes certainly didn't last long either. Betty admires the vendors for their hard work and simply wanted to encourage and acknowledge them for their efforts. Thank you Betty! The Our Voice community acknowledges you for your kindness and generosity.

- Ron MacLellan

## Waking Up From Dreamland

**O**ur Voice vendor Larry Nylund spent pretty much his whole life on the drag. He told me the story of how, as an underage youth, he used to go to The Coffee Cup at the corner of 96th and Jasper, across from W.W. Arcade, where he and his pals would buy mickeys of cheap rye whiskey for ten dollars (the older guys paid less). They would often smuggle them into the old Dreamland Theatre (formerly at 9697 - Jasper Avenue; around what is known today as the Jasper East Block). One time Larry was caught drinking underage in the theatre and was sent to juvenile detention where he naturally struck up some associations. Happening as it did at such a formative time in his life, Larry now recognizes that this experience brought him into the "wrong crowd at the wrong time".

Larry got heavily into drinking and partying. This was often the cause of him getting kicked out of his lodgings. When he was young and fit Larry would work off and on in bush camps and fighting fires. His stint in juvenile detention wasn't his last experience of being incarcerated. Larry was in and out of jail and it was in prison where he got his first tattoo and also tried his first needle. He liked it so he started using on the street. Things kept going downhill from there. He was busted for possession of narcotics and when the judicial system didn't have him confined he had trouble keeping a roof over his head because his rent money went to alcohol and drugs to "fix himself up". Larry sheepishly admits that after a while his friends didn't want to hang around him because he would con them to keep up his substance abuse.

Larry finally had slipped so far that he was drinking all the time, lining up to sleep at the George Spady Centre or sleeping in ravines and picking bottles. He said that he was finally motivated to improve his life when he became "sick and tired of being sick and tired". Larry got into a recovery program and was making tremendous progress when he experienced a relapse brought on by the terrible news of the death of his young son in a traffic accident. After a few more months on the street Larry again decided that enough was enough and got himself into Gunn Centre. He is now working to improve his literacy skills through the help of a tutor. The Our Voice community thanks Larry for his contribution (see "My Drug Life" on the right) to the June issue and we all wish him luck as he continues in his recovery.

## On This Side of Town

### My Drug Life

At first my drug life was gung ho, But then I got sick and tired of being sick, I got so sick of putting needles in my arms. All my friends had lost life day by day by putting needles in their arms. Then I landed up in jail. Then I thought to myself "Oh well, I'll smoke it." Then I got sicker. Then I tried the other side of town, the drinking part. I got so drunk and sick and tired of being sick and tired every day. But I found a place to go to be clean and sober. I've been clean and sober for just about two years now. But I must keep on the right track, just being straight and sober. Look at me! I'm clean and sober and I'm going to school and I'm trying to be a better person in my new life. I used to con people for my next fix or my next drink but now I don't have to do that anymore.

On this side of town I can remember what I did the night before. I don't worry about waking up in the alley.

If you haven't been where I have been, I'll tell you that it's a rough and dirty place to go. If you have been where I've been, look at your friends and ask yourself "Do I want them to remember me like this? Dirty and smelly?"

When I was using I was an asshole. I would lie and cheat and steal. I'd steal the gold fillings right out of your mouth if I had a chance.

But now I've found a better life and I like this side of town. You don't have to cheat and lie to your friends on this side of town. This kind of friend you need because they'll stick by you. Your friend on this side of town will help you, not to put you in the grave but to stay out, on this side of town.

- Larry Nylund



REPUBLIC R

The republic, as I at least understand it, means association, of which liberty is only an element, a necessary antecedent. It means association, a new philosophy of life, a divine Ideal that shall move the world, the only means of regeneration vouchsafed to the human race.

GIUSEPPE MAZZINI



# Soothsayer Sandy

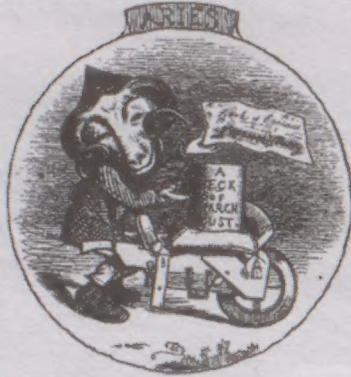
AQUARIUS

PISCES

## A ASTROLOGY

**Astrology:** do we make a hullabaloo among the stars, or do they make a hullabaloo down here?

MASON COOLEY



### GEMINI (May 21st - June 20th)

Contrary to what you might think, your difficulties with reality aren't lessened through substance use, but are heightened instead. Substances give the appearance of everything being all right but in fact they're keeping your hands off the wheel while you head toward the cliff. Sure, things look grim, but deal with it; you gotta keep your eyes on the road and your hands upon the wheel.



### CANCER (June 21st - July 22nd)

Beware the bottom feeder pusher, tyrannical in his little kingdoms. Slaves pay to fill their crazy bastard device, then say it to anybody close "do you wanna drive?" Tracks on arms and legs and tongues and souls make an orange Halifax facial look dignified. Contraddiction(s) impulse makes you yearn for how it should be but that just feeds the pain, despair and weakness... the mules that pull your grifters' plow.



### LEO (July 23rd - August 22nd)

"You can tell a man from what he has to say" except when he's an addict. Then you can't trust anything he says. Even he can only truthfully guarantee that his words are calculated to serve his monkey.



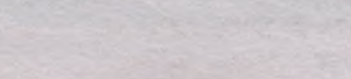
### VIRGO (August 23rd - September 22nd)

In today's society, if it feels good, and somebody's gonna make some money on it, we're encouraged to do it. Just remember that "wherever there is comfort there is pain, only one step away."



### LIBRA (September 23rd - October 22nd)

Mind the gap... between your ideal life situation and what you might end up with. It could start with a fall that leads to intractable deep muscle pain, or a gene might turn on when you reach a certain age and you could contract a debilitating medical condition that leads to substance dependency. And remember, when you're walking past the growing legions of people in need, "judge not, lest you be judged."



### SCORPIO (October 23rd - November 21st)

If you're not highly evolved Scorpio, your capacity for self-indulgence has the potential to lead you into a "debauched, evil, and treacherous" lifestyle that would more than likely be fueled by one or more illicit substances. Should you happen to commit a crime and be forced to go on the lam, depending on how many people you've alienated by your behaviour, you might not retain enough influence to have your legacy convey the lie that you "left for political reasons."

### SAGITTARIUS (November 22nd - Dec. 21st)

When you're lying in the dark with your knees pulled up to your chest and your sweat-soaked sheets are sticking to you but you don't care because you're trying to ride the bull that's bucking in your guts but you're feeling like there's no way you're going to make it to the bell, you'll need some help... so stop pissing everybody off.



### CAPRICORN (December 22nd - Jan. 19th)

From an ecological and even an economic perspective, we are at risk of "running out". Having nurtured a dependence on a particular lifestyle, having to go cold turkey could lead to some nasty jonesing. There must be some kind of serious debt associated with being overdrawn at the Bank of Mother Earth. Look at the compensation you're feeling entitled to, look at the less fortunate and then figure out how to ease down your withdrawals.



### AQUARIUS (January 20th - February 18th)

Caution is advised in the kitchen between the 12th and the 23rd. That strange smell could be the paint warming up as the flame heats the underside of the cupboard; or you could simply forget that candles are supposed to help eliminate tears while you're chopping onions.



### PISCES (February 19th - March 20th)

In the interest of holding onto your job, you might consider limiting your Internet porn surfing to your home computer. If you do get caught ogling in your cubicle and are successful in getting your co-worker to doubt his well-founded criticism of your behaviour by treating it as a joke, you'll still be a perverted, lying bastard.



### ARIES (March 21st - April 19th)

Unless you're doing field research for an alternative to architectural right angles, it's important to remember that intoxication through the excessive use of drugs and alcohol can be seen as an over-reward for the modest accomplishment of merely being.



### TAURUS (April 20th - May 20th)

Feeling frustrated with the slow pace of the liberalization of marijuana laws? Be grateful that you don't live in Singapore where the laws governing chewing gum have only recently been relaxed to the point where controlled sales for medicinal purposes are now permitted.



## Summer Programs at Moonlight Bay Centre

What are YOU doing with your summer?

*"This summer's staff was one of the best that I've ever been part of."  
(Summer 2003 staff)*

- ▶ A supportive, fun, and tight-knit team environment on Lake Wabamun
- ▶ A chance to further develop your skills and knowledge
- ▶ A meaningful opportunity to work in a key inner-city agency (Bissell Centre)
- ▶ A comprehensive week-long training session
- ▶ Access to camp recreation facilities and equipment
- ▶ Room and board in a comfortable cabin situated in a natural setting

*"I learned so much..." (Summer 2003 staff)*

Seeking promising students (18 years+) and non-students for a range of positions, including program staff, waterfront staff, assistant manager, caretakers, and cooks. Not yet 18? Check out the Moonlight Bay Volunteer Leadership Program!

*"It has been an honor and a pleasure to work at Moonlight Bay this summer."  
(Summer 2003 staff)*

For more information, see postings at U of A, GMCC, and Earth's General Store, or contact Kathryn Rambow (Manager of Moonlight Bay Centre) at [krambow@bissellcentre.org](mailto:krambow@bissellcentre.org)

## Performers Wanted!

Family Entertainment Night  
(Coffee House)

Open Stage! Live Music!  
Light Supper! Poetry Reading!

**DOOR PRIZES!!**

Tuesday, June 15th

Supper: 6:30 PM  
Music: 7:00 PM

Bissell Centre

10527 - 96 St.  
Contact: Earl @ 423-2285 ext. 144

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

For the Inner City

- ▶ Casual Labour
- ▶ Life Management Skills Training
- ▶ Career Counseling
- ▶ Résumé & Cover Letter Preparation
- ▶ Job Interview Skills
- ▶ Internet Training
- ▶ H2S Training (limited funding available)
- ▶ WHMIS/Standard First Aid Training

*All services offered at no cost!*

## CASUAL LABOUR

*"Pay the worker -  
NOT the broker"*

Minimum hourly rate - \$8.00  
Minimum 4 hours per day

Workers available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day  
Bookings taken within work hours  
Mon-Thurs: 7am-2pm  
Fri: 7am-noon

Need someone to help with...

- ▶ Yard Work/Snow Removal
- ▶ Loading/Unloading
- ▶ Decorating - internal/external
- ▶ Cleaning - domestic/industrial
- ▶ Manufacturing
- ▶ General Labour

*All services offered at no cost!*

BISSELL CENTRE

Telephone: 424-4385

Or

Casual Labour program for women at  
Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton

Telephone: 421-1175 ext 22

Mon-Fri 7pm-3pm



Bissell Centre's  
Thrift Shoppes

8818 118 Ave  
471-6644

9232 34 Ave  
440-1883

**New and  
Gently-Used  
Fashions  
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- jewellery • collectibles
- antiques

**the best quality  
lowest prices**

We are 100% non-profit  
and locally owned  
No GST ever

**ALL PROFITS SUPPORT THE PROGRAMS  
AND SERVICES OF BISSELL CENTRE  
IN EDMONTON'S INNER CITY**

BOTH STORES  
ARE OPEN SEVEN  
DAYS A WEEK





A city has values as well as slums, excitement as well as conflict ... a personality that has not yet been obliterated by its highways and gas stations.

- Charles Abrams

## Replacements Available for Our Voice 2004 Calendar

Please note that the months of June, November & December of the *Our Voice Urban Exposure* Calendar contain printing errors.

Replacement calendars are now available from *Our Voice*.

For more information, please contact Ron at:  
423-2285 Ext. 139.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

## ACTIVIST AGENDA JUNE 2004

**May 30th - June 5th: The COMMUTER CHALLENGE** is a friendly competition between Canadian communities to encourage as many people as possible to use sustainable and active modes of transportation. All you have to do is make a commitment to walk, jog, cycle, in-line skate, take the bus, carpool or tele-work during Environment Week (May 30 - June 5, 2004), then let us know the mode you used and the distance you traveled. Sign up and add your eco-commuting to help Edmonton totals. Contact: <http://www.commuterchallenge.ca>

**May 30th, Sunday @ 11 am: WORLD PARTNERSHIP WALK:** Join other Edmontonians on May 30, 2004 as we walk to support Smart Solutions to global poverty. Participants have the choice of a 3 or a 7-kilometre walk. Location: Alberta Legislature Grounds, Edmonton. Admission: FREE. Contact: 452-9555 or for more information see <http://www.wpw.ca/walkcities/edmonton.shtml> to register or for more information.

**June 3rd, Thursday @ 10:00 - 3:00pm: ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS FAIR** to educate and encourage attendees to participate in or support environmentally responsible and sustainable activities. Location: Atrium, Canada Place, 9700 Jasper Avenue. Admission: FREE. Contact: 497-3841.

**June 11-12: Understanding Cults and Other Charismatic Groups** by the American Family Foundation, with the co-sponsorship of Edmonton Society Against Mind Abuse (1985), are coordinating this international conference. Location: U of A Conference Centre. The theme is "The Violation of Innocence - How Cults Abuse Children." Interested persons may directly contact ESAMA at 780-452-1830; e-mail [esama@ecn.ab.ca](mailto:esama@ecn.ab.ca) to register or obtain a conference brochure.

**June 12th, Saturday @ 12 noon - 4:00 pm: FIFTH ANNUAL ECO-SOLAR HOME TOUR** of homes and buildings that display practical and timely examples of sustainability including: renewable energy (solar, wind, geothermal), energy security, energy efficiency, and low emission technologies. Witness how home and building owners are reducing their utility costs while increasing the quality of our air. Location(s): TBA in Edmonton and the surrounding area. Admission: FREE. Contact: [hometour@ecosolar.ca](mailto:hometour@ecosolar.ca) or visit [www.ecosolar.ca](http://www.ecosolar.ca)

**June 16th and 17th: CONFERENCE SHIFTING GEARS: SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY FOR WESTERN MUNICIPALITIES:** The two-day conference features lectures, interactive sessions and keynote addresses. Delegates will also have time to attend hands-on workshops and panel sessions, network with other delegates and view showcase displays. Location: Edmonton. Contact: Sierra Club at 439-1160 for more information or visit: [http://www.climatechangecentral.com/default.asp?V\\_DOC\\_ID=1395](http://www.climatechangecentral.com/default.asp?V_DOC_ID=1395)

**June 16th, Friday @ 3:00pm: Edmonton Police Commission Meetings** - Open to the Public. This is a forum on the Public Complaint mechanism. Location: Heritage Room, City Hall, 99th Street and 102a Avenue. Admission: FREE.

**June 18th - 20th: 26TH ANNUAL NORTH COUNTRY FAIR** Location: Joussard, AB. Admission: Adults \$75 (\$95 at the gate) and Youth/Student/Senior \$60 (\$70 at the gate) includes all the live music you can handle, camping, and a good time. Contact 780/988-3258 for questions about camping, volunteering, etc. or visit [www.northcountryfair.ab.ca](http://www.northcountryfair.ab.ca). Tickets are available from Earth's General Store until 8:00pm, Thursday, June 17th.

**June 18th - 20th: "HEALING OUR WORLD, WORKING TO RECONNECT"** workshop is designed to allow participants to become more effective more joyous and imaginative agents of social change. Location: Sylvan Lake, Alberta (camping-style retreat). Admission: \$120 (or \$100 by May 31st) - a deposit of \$25 is required by May 31st to reserve a spot. \$60 student/low income (or \$50 by May 31st). Contact: (780) 913-0504 (cell phone) or [sherpapadog@care2.com](mailto:sherpapadog@care2.com)

**June 25th - 27th: FOREST DEFENCE TRAINING CAMP** is a hands-on practical workshop in forest defence tactics. This is a non-violent direct action workshop and will cover a variety of subjects including: campaign planning, media relations, forest issues and more! Location: Borealis Eco-Park, 20km north of Edson, AB Admission: \$35 and this incredible price include meals and camping. Contact: 780/723-3533 or [www.auraborealis.com](http://www.auraborealis.com)

**June 29th, Tuesday @ 4:30 pm: Capital Health Board Meeting** - Open to the Public. Location: Community Gymnasium, Royal Alexandra Hospital, 10240 - Kingsway Avenue. Admission: FREE.

### SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION:

Try out the Commuter Challenge and try and continue to commute in an eco-friendly manner for many more weeks to come. Check out the Edmonton Bicycle Commuters' Society at 433-2453 to help get your bicycle in road-worthy shape.

### SMILE! - YOU'RE ON CAMERA

The surveillance cameras will once again be placed about Strathcona during the summer festivals. There is even talk about these being utilized throughout the year and not just at peak periods. If you would like to voice your opinions about this issue please contact your city councillor.

If you know of an upcoming activist event that should be listed here please e-mail Michael at [egs@interbaun.com](mailto:egs@interbaun.com) or contact Earth's General Store at 439-8725. If you would like to receive bi-weekly updates to this e-newslist please contact [egs@interbaun.com](mailto:egs@interbaun.com)

## ACTIVIST AGENDA